

An Antifascist Analysis of Christian Dominionism and the New Apostolic Reformation

August 16, 2024

A critical analysis of the New Apostolic Reformation (NAR) and Christian Dominionism from [Philly Fash Watch](#).

The purpose of this text is to provide anti-fascists with the necessary background to understand the beliefs, organizing model and radiant influence of [The New Apostolic Reformation \(NAR\)](#), as well as the particular threat it poses as an emerging center of gravity for the developing American fascist movement.

There are many denominations and movements cultivating authoritarian political beliefs amongst Christian Americans, but the [New Apostolic Reformation](#) is unique in terms of its inherently authoritarian politics, theological flexibility, networked organizational structure and ability to influence Christians from different traditions.

Furthermore, the NAR was the first Christian group to promote Trump, and have taken on the role of his spiritual advisors and links to

the Evangelical community. This was originally a controversial move, but was justified by comparing the obviously godless Trump to King Cyrus of Persia, the virtuous pagan who ended the Babylonian captivity and allowed the Jews to return to Palestine. This rather impressive theological bullshit has paid back in dividends as more and more Christians have accepted the idea that modern Prophets are guiding the Christians of America.

[Christian Dominionism](#) is defined as the belief that Christians should take control of the State. While the term has entered the mainstream of many parts of the American Left, many antifascists tend to see it as just another incarnation of evangelical politics, if a more totalitarian one, and not particularly worthy of much attention when compared to the deluge of white supremacist shooters and would be terrorists currently threatening our communities.

While neo-Nazis represent the most advanced terrorist threat within the far-Right, the New Apostolic Reformation is the most advanced social threat. By this we mean that they have an extraordinary power to shape the very experience of reality of massive communities of American Christians. Most neo-Nazis are skeptical of mass politics, due to the long history of federal infiltration of their movements. The New Apostolic Reformation is devoted to mass politics; their faith revolves around the concept of

revival, or mass conversion to their cause.

Currently, the NAR is dedicated to winning power via the legitimization of the American political process. They have already had a good deal of success on this front. Representatives Lauren Bobert and Marjorie Taylor Green are deeply affiliated with the movement, as is the Speaker of the House, Mike Johnson. Pennsylvania State Senator Doug Mastriano and Supreme Court Justice Samuel Alito are also connected, in addition to scores of state and local level office holders.

When Donald Trump, contrary to the prophecies of the movement, lost re-election, networks of "Prophets" and "Apostles" were [some of the main forces in galvanizing the January 6th Capitol riot](#). This act demonstrated the movement's willingness to seize power by non-democratic means and should be understood as a sign of things to come. The New Apostolic Reformation is changing America, and if we want to prevent them from achieving the power they desire, we have to understand them on their own terms.

To call the NAR a denomination would be inaccurate, as it specifically emerged from the world of non-denominational charismatic Christianity. It would also ignore the vectors by which they are able to push their political theology into other Christian groups, Charismatic and otherwise.

Charismatic Christianity is an outgrowth of Evangelicism, particularly the Pentecostal Tradition, best known for its spectacular practices of snake handling and speaking in tongues. To be a Charismatic Christian is to seek a kind of constant mystical experience of reality, to be filled with the Holy Spirit and to see God's divine plan manifest in everyday life. It is a rather extraordinary tradition, because organized religion tends to put careful guardrails around mystic practices, and carefully guide mystics to incorporate their work into the pre-established orthodoxy of their religion. When this doesn't happen, mystics and their followers have a tendency of being destabilizing forces in society.

The roots of the NAR traces back to the work of a [C Peter Wagner](#) at Fuller seminary in southern California. Wagner was the student of John Wimber, of Grapevine ministries. Wimber brought the practices of independent non-denominational Charismatics to the more mainstream audience of Fuller, and Wagner was his student and successor. These were literal courses in miracles, and helped spread the Charismatic idea that belief Jesus and the presence of the holy spirit gave Christians supernatural powers.

Around the same time Wagner did graduate work in sociology studying Church growth. The Study of Church growth is a very involved discipline, and Wagner was focusing on Church Governance as a factor. In his later writings he proposed a new structure. He rejected denominational rules and bylaws, democratic structures and individual autocracy in favor of a networked ecosystem of Churches ruled by Charismatic leaders. Now many of these leaders who came into Wagner's emerging network had already begun to call themselves Apostles and Prophets.

These extraordinary titles are literal. These people genuinely believe they are receiving messages from the divine and being told to enact divine will. Their claims are justified using a concept called five-fold ministry which is extrapolated from

Ephesians 4:11-13, "So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ." While for the vast majority of more Orthodox Christians the Prophets are a thing of the past and the Apostles passed on their authority to the Church (or the Bible, if you are Protestant), Prophecy and Apostleship are alive and well for the Charismatics of the NAR.

This is the most extreme development away from Christian Orthodoxy since Martin Luther split from the Catholic Church, it is also the fastest growing form of Christianity in America as well as world wide. Furthermore, there is evidence that ideas from the NAR are finding influence in more traditional Churches. A (unreplicated, so inconclusive) study by [Paul Djupe](#) from Dennison University suggests that the core of NAR theology (belief in modern Apostles and Prophets) is extremely contagious, influencing the theology of much more mainline churches. In fact he suggests that as many as 25% of the American Christians he polled believe it.

While the NAR was a highly organized project, the nature of the networked structure and its spiritual oligarchy has tended towards a denial of its unified nature. The influence of a church growth scholar doesn't give the group legitimacy and the nature of Charismatic spirituality has a preference for the organic and spontaneous. Camouflaging themselves also allows for members of the NAR to recruit more traditional Christians slowly, rather than presenting their non-traditional nature for all to see. The American evangelical world is changing rapidly, and the NAR has set itself up to catch those who are looking for something new. [This piece](#) from writer Holly Pivec gives tips on how to find if churches are concealing their NAR affiliations.

Many progressives and leftists have told themselves that secularization is an inevitable process that will destroy the influence of the Christian-Right. The reality appears to be that as the number of Christians shrink, there is a growth in fanaticism and thirst for political dominance. The fact that the NAR puts so much stock in elections is due to their desire to be act in accordance with what they believe to be the divinely inspired principles of America. Their ultimate belief is that a precondition of the rapture is the triumph of the church over the earthly governments of the world. The failed insurrection at the capital demonstrated that if they cannot win at the ballot box, they will try by other means.

[NAR leaders like Sean Fuecht](#) (a harmless looking, guitar playing youth minister) have used Proud Boys as their personal security. They have deep connections to "Christian" and "patriotic" militias around the country. Furthermore, they urge their congratulations to arm themselves and train for war against secular Americans who they believe are out to get them.

The most famous of these is probably [Matt Shea](#), the former Washington State Representative for Spokane. Shea was removed from office for distributing a text he wrote called "[The Biblical Basis for War](#)," which contains the memorable line "Kill all males who do not submit." Shea maintains extensive networks at extremist churches across Idaho, eastern Washington and beyond. The most important thing to remember about these networks is that many participants in them have been preparing for an American civil war for nearly 50 years. These are people who read the *Turner Diaries* but are more concerned with oppressing people for not being Christian rather than not being white, though racism is often a hidden part of Christian supremacism.

As capitalist crisis and the general dysfunction of the American political system accelerates, new powers will emerge to fill in the cracks. The NAR will be amongst them, and the rest of us need a plan

to counter them. They have been able to grow to the point of having millions of members with powerful representation in government.

While effectively being a fascist organization, a church is not something that can be treated like a clique of boneheads. I would urge all antifascists to meet this threat with the utmost urgency and caution. No matter where you live in the US these people are making moves. The first course of action is to find out who locally is already mapping the Apostolic networks. This will likely mean working with liberals and even other Christians. We need these people as allies. There are theologians who's work consists of preventing churches from being taken over by NAR theology. The old slogan of the [Anti-Racist Action \(ARA\) network](#) was expose, oppose and confront. We need to expose Apostolic networks, their relationships with those in government and business, and the threat to our communities that they constitute. When they try to take over school boards, we need that to be publicized. When groups like Moms for Liberty pull their stunts, we need people to understand exactly what they are confronting.

We are well past the point that small group action can have an effect on a group of this scale. As this piece is being written it looks like the Trump campaign is sinking before our eyes. This could mean that the NAR will attempt another extra-legal attempt at seizing power like January 6th. Even if they accept defeat, they will not do so forever. They are building durable institutions to take power, and we need a long term plan to stop them.

This article has been slightly edited for readability. Photo by [Edwin Andrade](#) on [Unsplash](#)

Running Down the Walls 2024 – The 25th Anniversary!

August 16, 2024

Announcing upcoming Running Down the Walls events in September of 2024 and beyond.

Since 1999, prisoners and supporters throughout Turtle Island, and recently in the UK, have participated in the annual event known as Running Down the Walls (RDTW) often running or walking simultaneously in many cities and prisons at once.

RDTW is a non-competitive 5K run/jog/walk/roll to raise awareness and funds for political prisoners as the primary fundraiser for the [ABCF Warchest Program](#). Over the years, we have raised *tens of thousands* of dollars and lots of awareness around the struggle to free political prisoners.

Many places will be hosting RDTW 2024 on Sunday, September 15th with a portion of funds raised also supporting local groups of the organizers' choosing- see event details below for specifics.

Planned Events in 2024:

[Portland, OR](#)
September 15th
11AM Tilkum Bridge (East Side)
[More info here.](#)

[Eugene, OR](#)
September 15th, 1 PM
Owen Rose Garden
[More info here.](#)

[Los Angeles, CA](#)
September 15th
751 Echo Park Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90026
[More info here.](#)

[Huntington Park, CA](#)
September 28th - 12pm
3382 E Florence Ave

[Chicago, IL](#)
September 15 - 5pm
MCC Chicago - 71 W Van Buren
MARCH & RALLY - 5K
MARATHON - BIKE & RUN - BANDS & DJs

[Philadelphia, PA](#)
September 15th - 11am sharp (Yoga warm-up at 10am)
FDR Park + remote participation

Registration deadline is September 1st (use link above)

[Bloomington, IN](#)
September 15th - 1pm
Bryan Park
Registration through August (use link above)

[Lowell, MA](#)
September 15th - 11am
Boarding House Park, 40 French St

[Brooklyn, NY](#)
September 15th - 2pm
Prospect Park- Lincoln Road/East Lake Drive, east of the Terrace Bridge
[Register Here, Includes Vegan BBQ](#)

This list will be updated as more events are announced. Donate to the [Anarchist Black Cross warchest program here.](#)

Reportback on the Disruption of Fierté Montréal's Corporate Parade

August 15, 2024

Reportback from [Faction Anti-Genocidaire et Solidaire](#) on recent disruption of Pride in solidarity with Palestine.

On Sunday, the F.A.G.S. (Faction Anti-Genocidaire et Solidaire) and its queer and trans accomplices disrupted Fierté Montréal's corporate, Zionist, colonialist pride parade.

We gathered at 1pm in drag bloc outfits and makeup in the spectator zone at Place Ville Marie. Nearly a dozen cops with SIS armbands mobilized to surveil our gathering, as clearly a group of queers at pride protecting each other from COVID is cause for suspicion. At around 1:30pm, towards the beginning of the parade, we took to the street as Helem, Mubaadarat, and Independent Jewish Voices' Queer for Palestine float passed by. By marching behind their float as part of the parade for a short while, we managed to sooth the fears of the anxious piggies.

After briefly marching, we stood in place and deployed an extra-long banner to begin dispersing and disrupting the parade and deliver a speech on Fierté Montréal's corporate pinkwashing. After this, we communicated with the members of the AGIR float behind us, allowing them and several other community floats pass and continue parading, before blocking the Bubly sparkling water float.

We continued marching and zig-zagging backwards through the parade, largely evading police intervention and briefly blocking various floats tied to Zionist corporate interests. Floats and contingents in solidarity cheered us on and raised their fists as we passed. A small contingent carrying Zionist flags approached. We attempted to block them by rapidly deploying a second extra-long banner, but police brutally pushed us to the side of the road and stole our banner.

As cop presence began to escalate, we decided to switch directions and march back towards the front of the parade, following and protesting the Zionist contingent. After halting the parade several times on our way back towards the front, we stopped at Jeanne-Mance and René Levesque. Here, we blocked the entire back portion of the parade, where almost all complicit floats were located.

During this time, police, Zionists, private security and Fierté marshals attacked and insulted us while bystanders cheered us on and chanted with us. Autonomous members of the Helem, Mubaadarat, and IJV contingent came back to join us after their successful and poignant die-in disruption. Other members of the community responded to our public call for support. Our numbers were boosted to around 150 demonstrators.

As pigs multiplied and donned their riot gear, as prisoner transport vehicles arrived, as Fierté begged us to allow their corporate parade to continue, as Zionists threw

projectiles at us, as the hot August sun beat down on us, *we stood our ground.*

As cops shoved us, pulled us, hit us with batons, tried to steal our materials, threatened us, and brutalized us in front of a crowd of our fellow queers, *we remained steadfast and defiant.*

We blocked the parade at Jeanne Mance for nearly an hour before police and *class traitor* Fierté marshals worked together to redirect the parade to the other side of the median.

After the parade went by on the other side of the road, we marched down René Levesque chanting slogans against pinkwashing and police. The vast majority of bystanders cheered us on, while certain bystanders shouted racist vitriol at us, showing their true colours as Zionist, capitalist, colonialist white cis men. We eventually dispersed into the Metro. No arrests were made.

Though we didn't manage to cancel the parade outright, we consider this action successful.

We blocked corporate floats long enough that many of their potential spectators further along the parade route left out of boredom. We showed queer bystanders and the media that *police are not afraid to brutalize queers during a pride parade.* We reminded the world that *pride started as a riot against the police,* not as a parade sponsored by corporate interests. We showed that as queers of conscience in Tio'tià:ke, like in Tkaronto, the Coast Salish territories colonially known as Vancouver, and elsewhere across Turtle Island and around the world, *we will not accept a genocide in our names.*

*Fuck pinkwashing
Fuck Fierté Montréal
Fuck the police
No justice
No peace*

Following Violent Attack by

Proud Boys, Independent Journalist Alissa Azar Found Guilty on Charges of Riot, Disorderly Conduct

August 15, 2024

Report from the [Civil Liberties Defense Center \(CLDC\)](#) on the recent sentencing of independent journalist Alissa Azar.

Alissa Azar, prominent Syrian-American independent journalist in the Pacific Northwest, has been found guilty of riot, and disorderly conduct following her trial this week that resulted from her reporting at a Proud Boy recruitment show of force on June 18, 2021. This county, which shares a border with the City of Portland, Oregon, had been a flash point of far-right activity as less urban communities were tested for their tolerance of far right extremists such as the Proud Boys-who were central participants in the January 6, 2021 attacks on both the US and Oregon Capitols that day. On June 18th, five months after January 6th, [Proud Boy and...] the Vice Chair of the Clackamas Republican party, Daniel Tooze, who was present in the park that day, told park staff that he and the Proud Boys were going to attack any counter-protestors that showed up.

As an Arab woman journalist, Ms. Azar, has frequently been targeted and attacked by Proud Boys, as they have targeted many other journalists who expose their bigoted violence. On June 18, Ms. Azar was threatened, menaced and physically assaulted by two large Proud Boys who were holding metal batons, sticks and bear mace. As a result of this chaotic and unusually violent Proud Boy attack, Ms. Azar was forced to use pepper spray in self-defense and in defense of her property that was being stolen and destroyed. She was then attacked from behind by one of the most notoriously violent Proud Boys, Gordon Cronk, Jr., who is currently facing numerous felony



Abolitionist Militancy in the Spirit of Black August
Black August study, fast, train, fight: Nurturing Militancy and Preparing for the Day of Action. Black August holds a profound significance for abolitionist prisoners, as it serves as a time to honor...



When the fascist machinery decides to end a rebel it is the graveyard or a cell. The revolution is not legal, it will not be won in a courtroom. We let Aug 7th serve as an example & reminder to the lengths we may have to go to free our ppl as the struggle intensifies #BlackAugust



This #BlackAugust, donate to the @JailLawSpeak mutual aid fund.

100% of the fund goes directly towards people inside that need commissary, law books and phone time. This mutual aid will be distributed through the JLS national network.
#ShutEmDown



Black August Mutual Aid Drive



In the feds people are looking for lawmakers that are ready to put on the books more bold legislature (like a 2 step act) that's going to free more ppl. Noone has seen that. Instead all we hearing is cops cops cops. Fuck!



The 821 was a positive move forward. Amendment 821 is a law that significantly changes the federal sentencing guidelines. The United States Sentencing Commission passed it on August 31st, 2023.

Some parts of the amendment apply retroactively start date February 1, 2024



As federal BOP law clerks, we see the devastating impact of 'tough on violent' laws. Call out the politicized terms like 'violent offender' for what they are - fear-mongering tactics to keep prisons packed and knock us out of any real relief that may pass





Scorching temperatures, stone-cold silence: The death of Juan Carlos Ramirez

Scorching temperatures, stone-cold silence: The death of Juan Carlos Ramirez

Juan Carlos Ramirez Bibiano died from heat-induced cardiac arrest after being held in an outdoor cage without water, shade, or ice at Telfair State Prison in Georgia. His family is suing for negligence.

1 79 108 9K



Typical African
@Joe_Bassey · Aug 7

Failed 16th Coup attempt against Captain Ibrahim Traore, shame on France and their allies.



523 15K 84K 3M



Jailhouse Lawyers Speak -
@JailLawSpeak · Aug 12

"When you see people call themselves revolutionary, always talking about destroying, destroying, destroying, but never talking about building or creating, they're not revolutionary. They do not understand the first thing about revolution. It's creating." Kwame Ture

0 3 12 453



Jailhouse Lawyers Speak -
@JailLawSpeak · Aug 11

Link to find JLS Black August shirts! All funds will go towards JLS organizing efforts/projects #blackaugust



Jailhouse Lawyers Speak -
@JailLawSpeak · Aug 8

The pro capitalist left...



Orisanmi Burton
@orisanmi · Aug 10

Understood as a geographically and temporally extensive revolt, "Attica" began 54 years ago today: August 10, 1970. #BlackAugustResistance



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In The Belly
@bellyzine · Aug 9

Poem: 1AM ON A 3'X6' STEEL SHEET TOP BUNK

BY CASEY GOONAN



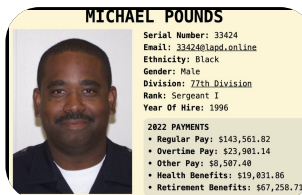
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Jailhouse Lawyers Speak -
@JailLawSpeak · Aug 8

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While wearing plainclothes and driving an unmarked vehicle, Sgt Michael Pounds shot and killed Ricardo "Ricky" Ramirez, Jr. The single shot went through the unmarked car's tinted window and into Ricardo's chest, according to a press release sent this morning. Ricardo was unarmed.



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Jailhouse Lawyers Speak -
@JailLawSpeak · Aug 7

FLEA day 2: #BlackAugust is a potent reminder that our struggle extends beyond the confines of prison walls. It is an opportunity for ppl to recognize the need for militant preparation and to stand in solidarity with individuals who are actively engaging in this process.



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Jailhouse Lawyers Speak -
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During this month, we not only deepen our political education but also prepare ourselves militantly...

charges for other violent attacks on journalists and counter-protestors. Cronk, who wore full body armor, a helmet and gloves with metal plates in them, punched Ms. Azar in the head leaving her unconscious. Ms. Azar was simply wearing a tank top, pants, and her camera, and had no protective gear on that day. During Azar's trial, the state has attempted to paint her mere presence at this event — even though she was clearly a journalist — as "participating in the riot, and her personal political ideologies as an antifascist as evidence to justify the charges levied against her

The importance of free press to a democratic society has never been clearer as we witness the chilling effect on imposing criminal liability for journalists who risk their personal safety to cover highly controversial events. Expert witness Shane Burley explained that many journalists from larger outlets will only cover Proud Boy events while wearing war correspondent ballistic gear and accompanied by their own security. He testified that the main tenet of the Proud Boys is to engage in political violence. Mr. Burley also testified that the overwhelming majority of journalists and Americans consider themselves antifascists, particularly as opposed to identifying as a fascist or as part of a violent street gang like the Proud Boys.

In closing arguments, the state prosecutor, Joshua Cutino, indicated that the solution to the problem of large, armed and violent Proud Boy hate events in local communities is for everyone to "just drive by." Defense counsel responded by pointing out that in previous eras of fascist creep, such as those experienced in Nazi, Germany, "driving by" fascist displays only emboldened what would become a genocide and a dark historic moment.

Despite the fact that arresting officers admitted on the stand that they arrived after widespread violence broke out and therefore did not witness the attack upon Ms. Azar, she was the only person with antifascist political beliefs to be charged (only 3 Proud Boys, including Cronk were also charged — Cronk and another man are still

at large, wanted on warrants for their arrest). Alissa Azar is a known entity to not only the Proud Boys and extreme-right, but also to the local and regional police as well. Ms. Azar extensively covers activities of the extreme-right as well as abuse of power by law enforcement, which created questions of police bias and targeting, following her selective prosecution. As the defense argued in this case, Ms. Azar was not a leader or organizer of the June 18, 2021 event, nor is she a representative of "Antifa." If the state's reasoning for her arrest is simply that they needed to prosecute an antifascist 'so it would look fair,' and she was the easiest one to identify, that is an illegitimate basis to prosecute an individual.

Update from the Casey Support Committee

August 13, 2024

An update on political prisoner Casey Goonan. Originally posted by the Anarchist Black Cross Federation (ABC-F).

On July 23rd Casey was indicted by a federal grand jury on three charges all relating to the same incident. Two of the charges allege destruction of property by fire/explosives and carry a 5-20 year sentence each if convicted. The third charge alleges possession of an unregistered firearm and carries a maximum of 10 years (note: "firearm" here is referring to the alleged destructive device, not a gun). Casey's lawyers have officially agreed to represent them in federal court.

Casey is back in Santa Rita in federal custody and expects to remain where they are for the time being. All the transfers and changes in custody were jarring and Casey will hopefully be able to finally settle into a routine. Alongside their already rigorous usual studies they have been pursuing their own legal self-education in preparation for their ongoing case.

In observance of Black August, Casey will be participating in FLEA

days along with one other person from their pod- 24 hour fasts in commemoration of New Afrikan revolutionaries on the days they were assassinated. [Here](#) is more information about the history of Black August for those wanting to learn more!

People across the country have been putting out beautiful statements of support! These are so important as they demonstrate the incredible love people have for Casey for their years of commitment to community, solidarity, and mutual aid.

[Statement of Solidarity with Casey Goonan by Stevie Wilson](#)

[Message of Support to Free Casey Goonan: Free Them All! by Hybachi LeMar](#) of Black Autonomy Federation - Chicago

The support team has also been working on launching a crowdfunding campaign for Casey, so please stay tuned and start thinking about how to mobilize your networks or throw a fundraiser yourself! Updates will come soon. We can currently already accept large donations from individual donors in the form of checks, please reach out for more information to make this happen.

If you would like to write Casey, you can do so at:

Casey Goonan #UMF227
Santa Rita Jail
5325 Broder Blvd
Dublin, CA 94568

Casey is still excited to receive mail including updates on news and current affairs as they have been feeling cut off from the world.

As a reminder:

- Do not discuss the case. Casey is still pre-trial and receiving mail concerning their case can seriously endanger them.
- Do not valorize Casey. They are a person and a member of our community, not a symbol or martyr. Casey isn't looking for praise, but rather to maintain correspondence.
- Do not write anything you wouldn't want Fox News, a

cop, or a judge to see. Assume that intelligence and law enforcement agencies are reading your letter.

- As you correspond with Casey, they may send requests aside from books or commissary. Please coordinate directly with Casey's Support Committee regarding additional asks.

If you wish to help keep money on Casey's books, there are several ways to do this:

- At the jail via the TouchPay kiosk in the lobby.
- Sending a money order in the mail. The money order must be made payable to "Casey Goonan #UMF227" and there must be no other material in the envelope. No cash or personal checks will be accepted.
- Online with a credit card via one of the vendor platforms run by GlobalTel such as accesscorrections.com or connectnetwork.com. You will have to create an account. If the platform offers different fund options, the fund you want to get Casey money for commissary is called the "Trust Fund".

Your ongoing support is so needed and appreciated. To receive these updates by email, message ccommittee@proton.me

Stay strong! Stay tuned!
Love & Struggle from the Casey Support Committee

Photo by [Rajesh Rajput](#) on [Unsplash](#)

"Should Anarchists Vote?" is the Wrong Question

August 13, 2024

A critical reflection from Wayne Price on the question of participating in elections. Originally posted to *Anarkismo*.

by Wayne Price

As I write this, we are moving ever closer to U.S. Election Day

November 2024. (Although if this is read after that election, the issues discussed should still be relevant.) The small number of people who regard themselves as anarchists are discussing whether to vote. From Michael Bakunin and Peter Kropotkin in the late 19th century onward, revolutionary anarchists have rejected participation in elections.

In the words of Kropotkin, "The anarchists refuse to be a party to the present state organization and to support it by infusing fresh blood into it. They do not seek to constitute, and invite the workingmen not to constitute, political parties in the parliaments....They have endeavored to promote their ideas directly among the labor organizations and to induce those unions to a direct struggle against capital...." (2002; p. 287)

This is based on the central insight that the state is not neutral. By its nature, it serves the rich and powerful in their exploitation and oppression of the people. This state machinery cannot be used to peacefully and "democratically" create a free socialist democracy. Anarchists believe that capitalism and its state must be overturned, abolished, and replaced with cooperative, self-managed, alternate institutions. They should not be strengthened by joining in sham rituals of limited democracy.

Yet here we have a presidential election in which one candidate (the Republican Donald Trump) is arguably much more evil than the other (the Democrat Kamala Harris). Should anarchists vote for the lesser evil for once?

Many Marxists are also in a pickle. From Karl Marx on, their strategy has been to create a workers' party in opposition to all capitalist parties, from liberal to conservative. Many Marxists, at least those influenced by Trotskyism, have opposed ever voting for capitalist parties. Yet here they are facing two capitalist parties, one which is in the bourgeois center and the other is quasi-fascist. Should they vote for the moderate capitalist candidate? (Also, libertarian-autonomist Marxists generally reject voting and are in a

similar bind as the anarchists.)

However, when discussing this (and previous) elections with friends, co-workers, and family, I do not try to persuade them not to vote for the lesser evil Democrats. I don't much care. One or a few individual votes does not make much difference. The votes of a small number of radicals do not have much of an impact. This is especially true for most U.S. citizens, due to the archaic and undemocratic Electoral College system. Only a minority live in the six or so "battleground states." For everyone else, their votes are irrelevant; the fix is in. (For example, I live in New York State, whose electoral college votes will certainly go to the Democrats.)

Instead, I try to get others to agree that the lesser evil is indeed evil. Since it is hard for people to admit to themselves that they are supporting an evil, there is a tendency for liberals, after a while, to persuade themselves that the lesser evil, while not perfect, is really pretty good.

Liberals claim that there are various positive programs for which the Biden-Harris administration can take credit. True or not, these must be put alongside the mass murder being carried out in Gaza by the Israeli government, paid for and armed by the U.S. state. Tens of thousands of Palestinians have been indiscriminately killed. This is only one activity of the enormous US military-industrial complex, endorsed by both parties, including hundreds of overseas military bases and enough nuclear bombs to exterminate humanity. Not to mention the immigration policies of the Democratic administration. It worked out a "bipartisan" immigration bill which accepted the most repressive aspects of the Republican program. The bill only failed when Trump denounced it, being unwilling to let the Democrats get credit. The extent of economic inequality and regional stagnation has increased—major factors in pushing white workers toward Trumpism. And the Biden-Harris government has presided over a vast expansion of US gas and oil production, further attacking the biosphere. The Democrats talk a good game about ending global



Black labor exploitation via share cropping in the 1950s – Deb Slavery.

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Jailhouse Lawyers Speak -

@JailLawSpeak · Aug 13

#BlackAugust, we salute the work by Comrade W.L. Nolen as a jailhouse lawyer. It was his guerilla jailhouse lawyering that has inspired many other militant jailhouse lawyers across the country to continue the legacy of resistance through the courts and underground networking.



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Jailhouse Lawyers Speak -

@JailLawSpeak · Aug 13

** All Jailhouse Lawyers are not the same when it comes to political ideologies. This is why we cannot work with just anyone and every org. Some of you are cop supporters or about maintaining what we desire to dismantle....
#prisonclass
#jailhouselawyersspeak
#blackaugust

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Jailhouse Lawyers Speak -

@JailLawSpeak · Aug 1

Every BA we do a mutual aid drive. Black August mutual aid goes 100% directly towards people inside that need commissary, law books and phone time. This mutual aid will be distributed through the Jailhouse Lawyers Speak national network.
* Read 4 details



Jailhouse Lawyers Speak -

@JailLawSpeak · Jul 16

Mutual Aid can be directed directly towards the inside people led Prisoners Human Rights and Jailhouse Lawyers networks/projects by cash app \$ arebelsworld or Venmo @ arebelsworld



Black August Mutual Aid Drive



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Jailhouse Lawyers Speak -

@JailLawSpeak · Aug 13

New Jersey father, Anthony Collins, sentenced to 3-years in prison after fatally punching white man who hit his wife with a bike and repeatedly called his children the n-word, Judge says he should have called the police instead



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Jailhouse Lawyers Speak -

@JailLawSpeak · Aug 13

#BlackAugust, we salute the work by Comrade W.L. Nolen as a jailhouse lawyer. It was his guerilla jailhouse lawyering that has inspired many other militant jailhouse lawyers

across the country to continue the legacy of resistance through the courts and underground networking.



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Jailhouse Lawyers Speak -

@JailLawSpeak · Aug 13

#BLACKAUGUST 13TH! We honor our martyred freedom fighters of resistance and liberation. Remembering W.L. Nolen, Cleveland Edwards, and Alvin Miller, who were taken from us on January 13, 1970 in the infamous O Wing of Soledad Concentration Camp. Never let them forget #prisonclass



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394



Jailhouse Lawyers Speak -

@JailLawSpeak · Aug 13

Obviously this is not a new revelation [only now days pigs of hue got to participate with a badge or as DAs] but this plays out in courtrooms, jails and prisons. It's what built capitalism and has maintained the status quo.
#infrastructureracism

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Atlanta Community Press Collective

@atlanta_press · Aug 12

Juan Carlos Ramirez Bibiano died from heat-induced cardiac arrest after being held in an outdoor cage without water, shade, or ice at Telfair State Prison in Georgia. His family is suing for negligence.

Read more:





fascist system's credibility, and destroying our own.' - Blood in My Eye by George Jackson




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James Harold Holiday aka Doc of the Black Guerilla Family, an original and close Comrade of George L. Jackson. He holds the line in his older age. We continue to learn and build on his years of error and success in the underground Prisoners/Blk revolutionary movement



 Jailhouse Lawyers Speak - 
  
 @JailLawSpeak · Aug 15

"Our Struggle Continues..."
James Holiday aka Doc




54


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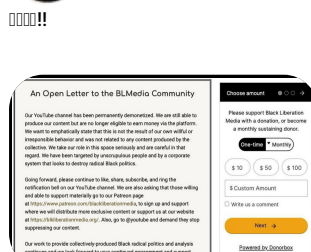
It's #BlackAugust ! You should expect Black August messages from us and related revolutionaries that have been instrumental in the prison resistant movement of Amerika. Never forget JLS formation started from jailhouse lawyers that are holding the torch of George L. Jackson



 **kitelineradio**
@kitelineradio · Aug 14

For this week's episode we air the final talk of the Pittsburgh Anti-Repression Convergence, a space for activists, political prisoner supporters, and former political prisoners to strategize against repression in the context of social movements.


 **Black Liberation Media**
@BLM_edia · Aug 14







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Imagine that



 Jailhouse Lawyers Speak - 00 00 00
@JailLawSpeak · Aug 14

There are ppl coming into the prisons with substance use disorders begging for treatment options. Treatment options were already little to none. These days prisoncrats are back to full throttle punishment measures for addiction violations in prisons or jails.

 Jailhouse Lawyers Speak - 
 
 @JailLawSpeak · Aug 14

With the constant lockdown measures of prisons, more and more ppl are turning to substances in order to escape the prison reality.

Afeni | #FreePalestine
@factsandfire · Aug 14

Y'all sound like feds []
p1

 **Dr. CBS**
@blackleftaf · Aug 13

Yes I'm a single issue voter and my issue is US imperialism.

AFRICAN & BLACK HISTORY
@AfricanArchives · Aug 13

The Real Question is Mass Strategy

The important question is not what a small number of isolated radicals should do on election day. It is what revolutionary anarchists should advocate for the large organizations, communities, and movements: the unions, the African-American community, Latinx people, immigrants, Arab-Americans, organized women, LGBTQ people, environmentalists, anti-war activists, etc., etc. Overwhelmingly such forces follow a strategy of organizing for the Democratic Party, providing it with money and personnel. They are the “base” of the Democrats, without whom the party would collapse. (In the U.S. system, neither party has an actual membership.)

What anarchists and other radicals should advocate is that these groupings cease spending money and people on the Democrats and adopt an alternate, non-electoral, strategy of direct action.

Overall the liberal strategy (also carried out by democratic socialists and Communists) has not worked out very well. Since the end of World War II, conservative presidents and Congresses have been followed by more-or-less liberal/moderate presidents, to great rejoicing by progressives and reformists. But these have never resulted in stable progressive change. Time after time, these liberal/moderate administrations have been followed by ever-more reactionary governments.

Kennedy-Johnson was followed by Nixon. Carter was followed by Reagan and then the first Bush. Clinton was followed by the second Bush. Obama was followed by Trump, so far the worst of all. The election of Biden did not stop the growth of Trumpism and its complete takeover of the Republican Party. Even if Trump is defeated in November 2024, the

far-right semi-fascist movement will continue to grow. It will threaten to come to power in the not-so-distant future. Over time, the greater evil cannot be defeated by a lesser evil. Only a radical alternative can do that.

The main policy of the “democratic socialists” (social democrats, reformist state socialists) has been to work in the Democratic Party. They hope to take it over, or at least to take over a section. This is the program of Bernie Sanders or Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez and most of the Democratic Socialists of America. Instead, it is they who have been taken over, grumbling about the Biden-Harris genocide in Gaza but powerless to make real change in the government. They are stuck supporting a government of mass murder—as the lesser evil.

Some radicals criticize the Democratic Party, for good reasons. They wish to replace this party of capitalism, imperialism, racism, and ecological catastrophe with a new party. This might be called a labor party, or a progressive party, or a Green Party, or a people's party. It might start from scratch or be broken off from the Democrats.

The implication is that the problem is the Democratic Party in itself, rather than the electoral system of the capitalist state. But building a new party in the U.S. would be extremely difficult—by no accident. The vast amount of money needed, the Electoral College, the gerrymandering of districts, the number of signatures to get on the ballot, the dirty tricks of the two established parties, the differing election cycles for different positions—all these and more make a successful new party virtually impossible. The last time it happened was the creation of the Republican Party over the slavery issue, as the country was on the verge of a civil war.

In any case, the various advocates of some kind of new party have rarely examined the history of socialist electoralism. There is a long history of independent socialist parties running in elections in Europe and elsewhere. As anarchists predicted, the elected socialist representatives

invariably adapted to the political milieu of the government. They made deals and became chummy with their bourgeois counterparts, becoming bourgeois politicians themselves.

Whenever these parties came close to real power, the capitalists have squelched them. Businesses have gone on “capital strikes,” refusing to invest in the country and shutting down industry. They have spent large sums on conservative parties. They have subsidized fascist gangs. They have promoted military coups. Social democrats have been forced to capitulate or be overthrown. From the early social democrats to the rise of European fascism to the history of socialists in France, Chile, Greece (Syriza), Venezuela, and so on, electoral strategies have never worked to move toward a new society. Yet each time there is an upswing of the left, reformist socialists treat an electoral approach as a brand-new brilliant idea.

If Not Elections, Then What?

The liberals and democratic socialists asked: If not elections, then what? How will the people assert power against the ruling elites? Or are you waiting for the Great Day, the Final Revolution, which will solve all our problems? What do we do in the meantime?

Anarchists too are for improvements in the lives of ordinary people. Anarchists are not for waiting for the revolution, which is not around the corner. The fight for reforms may cause people to have better lives in the here and now. Even if such fights were to fail, at times, working people may learn lessons about who their real enemies are and how to fight them. But revolutionary anarchists do not advocate attempts to use elections and party politics to gain improvements. What then?

Errico Malatesta argued that “what little good...is done by elected bodies...is really the effect of popular pressure, to which the rulers concede what little they think is necessary to calm the people....

[Electionists] compare what is done in the electoral struggle with what would happen if nothing were done; while instead they should compare the results obtained from...the ballot box with those obtained when other methods are followed, and with what might be achieved if all effort used to send representatives to power...were [instead] employed in the fight to directly achieve what is desired.” (Malatesta 2019; p. 179)

To repeat the previous quotation from Kropotkin, anarchists “have endeavored to promote their ideas directly among the labor organizations and to induce those unions to a direct struggle against capital.”

Consider major movements in U.S. history: In the thirties and afterward, workers won union recognition in major industries. They did this through huge strikes, occupations of factories, and fighting with scabs, vigilantes, police, and the national guard. The New Deal instituted social security and other welfare benefits due to this mass pressure from below.

In the fifties and sixties, African-Americans won the end of legal Jim Crow and racist terror. They engaged in boycotts, mass “civil disobedience” (law breaking), demonstrations, and urban rebellions (“riots”). The right to vote, desegregation, anti-discrimination laws, and anti-poverty programs were achieved through these struggles from below.

The movement against the U.S. war in Vietnam included huge demonstrations, draft resistance, civil disobedience, university occupations and strikes, and a virtual mutiny in the military. (And, of course, the military fight of the Vietnamese people.)

In this period, there was an upsurge in labor, including organizing unions and strikes in health care and for public employees, as well as wildcat strikes in key industries (such as the post office).

The LGBTQ movement exploded with the Christopher Street rebellion. It included the later ACT-UP civil disobedience to fight

against public inaction on AIDS. The women’s liberation movement developed in the context of these popular struggles and radicalization.

Periods of radicalization have died down. The unions became integrated into the system, heavily reliant on the Democratic Party. Legal segregation was ended—although African-Americans were still on the bottom of U.S. society. The U.S. state withdrew from Vietnam—although imperialism and war continue. The Black movement became co-opted by the Democrats and so were the remnants of the anti-war movement. The Democratic party served as the “graveyard of movements.”

However, the lessons remain, that real victories can be won through popular mass movements and direct action, outside of the electoral trap. The growth of union militancy in recent years and the pro-Palestinian movement on and off university campuses, give hope for the future. One general strike in a big city could change national politics. There is no road to anti-state socialism except through the mass action of the people.

Is It Fascism Yet?

Every election cycle, liberals are prone to shout that “fascism is coming!” unless the Republicans are defeated. Are they right this time? There is widespread fear, spread by liberals, and even not-so-liberal Democrats, that the election of Trump would be the replacement of U.S. democracy by a fascist-like dictatorship. On the other hand, among the far-left, there are those who argue that there really is no significant difference between the two capitalist parties. However there are other alternatives between overt fascism and there being no important differences.

In my opinion, there is little likelihood that a Trump victory would quickly install a regime on the model of classical European fascism. That would require declaring Trump president-for-life, cancelling all further elections,

outlawing all other parties including the Democrats, suspending the Constitution, and arming a uniformed vigilante movement similar to Hitler’s Storm Troopers or Mussolini’s Black Shirts.

Business people do not want this; after all they are making a lot of money under the current arrangement. (Most of business—now called “the donor class”—backs the Democrats in recent elections.) There is widespread unrest but not enough to make the bosses feel threatened in their wealth. The rest of the establishment, in and out of government, does not want overt fascism—including the “intelligence community” (national police forces) and the top military brass. It is impossible to make a successful coup without the support of the people with money and the people with guns. And at least half of the population does not want this.

More likely is a creeping authoritarianism, keeping the forms of political democracy while emptying them of content. It will tend toward Victor Orban’s Hungary rather than Hitler’s Third Reich.

“What we are likely to see is a lingering fascism of less murderous intensity, which, when in power, does not necessarily do away with all the forms of bourgeois democracy, does not necessarily physically annihilate the opposition, and may even allow itself to get voted out of power occasionally. [As recently happened in Poland—WP] But since its successor government...will also be incapable of alleviating the crisis, the fascist elements are likely to return to power as well.” (Patnaik & Patnaik 2019; p. 29)

Some say that there is no cause for worry, since the U.S. has gone through periods of right-wing repression and came out okay. For example, in the ‘fifties, after World War II, the U.S. was swept by anti-communist hysteria. This was led by Joe McCarthy, J. Edgar Hoover, the House Un-American Committee, and many more. The Democrats, from President Truman



Jailhouse Lawyers Speak · Aug 1

Every BA we do a mutual aid drive. Black August mutual aid goes 100% directly towards people inside that need commissary, law books and phone time. This mutual aid will be distributed through the Jailhouse Lawyers Speak national network.
* Read 4 details



Jailhouse Lawyers Speak - 00 00 00
@JailLawSpeak · Jul 16

Mutual Aid can be directed directly towards the inside people led Prisoners Human Rights and Jailhouse Lawyers networks/projects by cash app \$ arebelsworld or Venmo @ arebelsworld



Black August Mutual Aid Drive

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Sahel Revolutionary Soldier
@cecild84 · Aug 14

They will always find an African to fight against another African. A 36 year old man knows this, how come some of our African nations don't?

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IDOCWatch



Jailhouse Lawyers Speak · Aug 15

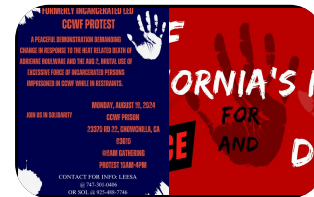
Ongoing Abuse & Horrific Condition in RHU at Indiana State Prison

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CURB
@CURBPrisons · Aug 12

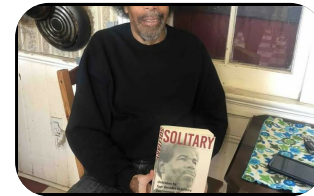
Is this the #CaliforniaModel? Heat deaths. Constant violence. ENOUGH. Incarcerated people are dying while @CAGovernor @GavinNewsom sweeps #homeless encampments and spends \$240 million on monuments to himself in #SanQuentin.

On 8/19, there's a protest at #CCWF demanding an end to this brutality. Instead of investing in communities, Newsom is ignoring calls to #CloseCAPrisons, criminalizing people, and stealing the belongings of the unhoused.



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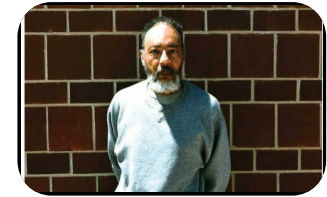


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BIG MALCOLM X PLAY COUSIN
@Omowale99949437 · Aug 15

Larry Hoover has an upcoming scheduled court date for September

26th, 2024. Hoover is seeking his release under the first step act law created by former president Donald Trump. U.S. Judge John Blakey has ordered that Hoover be physically present in court. This will be Hoovers first time outside of his 24 hr lockdown cell at ADX supermax prison since 1997.
#FREEDAGUYS



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Jailhouse Lawyers Speak - 00 00 00
@JailLawSpeak · Aug 15

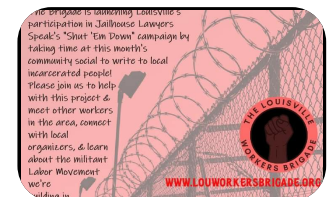
Awhile back zionist lobbyists made it clear that the U.S. Black youth were a major obstacle to their agenda. Today, the Republicans and Democrats are working over time to change this. Government low intensity warfare programs are active in the Black communities

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Jailhouse Lawyers Speak - 00 00 00
@JailLawSpeak · Aug 15

Join #LouisvilleWorkersBrigade on Wednesday August 28th for August Community Social!

They're taking time at this social to write letters to local jails and prisoners, beginning Louisville's participation in Jailhouse Lawyers Speak Shut 'Em Down campaign. #BlackAugust



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Jailhouse Lawyers Speak - 00 00 00
@JailLawSpeak · Aug 15

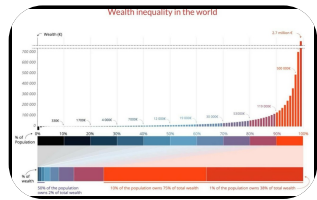
Liberation will not be found at the

produced climate change.

Again, these are the fault of the ruling class, not the poor.

By immiserating both overseas populations and residents of the United States while suppressing anti-capitalist protest movements, neoliberal centrists created a situation in which fascists can pretend to be the only ones offering an alternative. But the supposed alternative represented by politicians like Donald Trump will only speed up the process of wealth concentration that caused this problem in the first place.

The only real solution is a worldwide movement to resist fascism and abolish capitalism and the state.



CrimethInc. Ex-Workers
@Crimethinc@todon.eu • Jul 17

In the 2024 Republican platform, they explicitly promise to "CARRY OUT THE LARGEST DEPORTATION OPERATION IN AMERICAN HISTORY."

Why this obsession with attacking immigrants and refugees?

Over the past sixty years, wealth inequality in the United States has doubled. In 1963, the wealthiest families had 36 times the wealth of families in the middle of the wealth distribution; by 2022, they had 71 times the wealth of families in the middle.

In 1963, the wealthiest billionaire owned \$1.2 billion. In 2022, Elon Musk owned \$219 billion.

So it's not surprising that people are angry.

Yet using their vast resources to control the media, Donald Trump, Elon Musk, and other elements of the ruling class have managed to direct popular resentment at those who suffer most under capitalism—the undocumented, the poor, those whose families have been exploited for generations. This strategy is calculated to enable the rich to continue fleeing the middle class while avoiding consequences for it.

Gullible bigots blame the penniless
52

for their own problems, rather than holding the powerful to account.

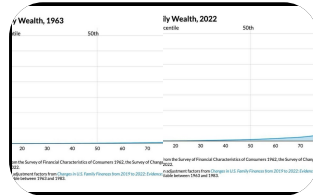
This is the recipe for fascism.

More on capitalism:

<https://crimethinc.com/work>

More on the scapegoating of immigrants:

<https://crimethinc.com/borders>



CrimethInc. Ex-Workers
@Crimethinc@todon.eu • Jul 17

Yesterday, a Trump-appointed judge threw out the entire classified documents case against Donald Trump, defying over half a century of legal precedents. This should give those who marched with signs reading "no one is above the law" cause to reflect.

Law is not an impartial institution that inherently serves to keep tyranny at bay. It is a weapon in the hands of the ruling class. It is chiefly used against poor people and activists; when it plays a role in internal conflicts within the ruling class, the outcome generally shows the balance of power between the factions.

In this context, promoting obedience to the law as a good in itself means accepting that might makes right. All the legitimacy that Biden and his supporters have invested in the legal system have only made it a more dangerous weapon for Donald Trump to employ, should he return to power.

As we move into an era in which the court system will serve the most authoritarian elements in our society, the argument that it is necessary to obey the law will be used to excuse complicity in more and more egregious crimes against humanity.

Instead of saying "no one is above the law," we should say, with Hannah Arendt, "No one has the right to obey." ☐

Our analysis on this subject from 2018 remains evergreen:

<https://crimethinc.com/abovethelaw>



CrimethInc. Ex-Workers
@Crimethinc@todon.eu • Jul 15

The shooting at Donald Trump's rally took place just in time to maximize ratings for the Republican National Convention. The Democrats already seem to be accommodating themselves to a future in which they will be the junior partners in an even more authoritarian reboot of state power.

In response to the shooting, politicians across the spectrum have decried "political violence." But political violence is fundamental to all government—not least the United States government. The key to Trump's appeal is that he is explicitly promising to direct this violence against undocumented people, poor people of color, women, queer and trans people, anarchists, and other scapegoats.

Trump's rise coincided with a dramatic spike in political mass shootings and vehicular attacks, many of which were carried out by his supporters. Everything that centrist politicians do to pave the way for his return renders them complicit in the bloodbaths ahead.

Anarchists already participated in the round of social unrest that ultimately blocked Trump's ambitions in 2017-2020. We know that voting, sign-holding, court cases, and liberal op-eds will not protect us or our neighbors.

Now it's time to prepare for the next round.

To study up on how it went last time:

<https://crimethinc.com/TrumpYears>



Jailhouse Lawyers Speak - ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

to the liberals, participated in it, instituting loyalty programs and political purges of government employees (including J. Robert Oppenheimer). People lost jobs in the civil service, schools, universities, unions, the entertainment industry, and elsewhere. Meanwhile the Southern states had legal racial segregation, violently enforced by the police and by the Ku Klux Klan. But eventually this repressive politics was cracked by the Civil Rights Movement and the anti-Vietnam War movement.

However, the fifties and sixties were the period of the "post-war boom," a big upswing of prosperity, at least for many white people in the U.S. The improvement in living standards made it unnecessary for the rulers to give up the advantages of political democracy (advantages for them), despite the upheavals of "the sixties."

Today the system confronts deeper crises. On a world scale capitalism is brittle and conflicted. There are wars raging in various places. The U.S. economy, while relatively stronger than the rest of the world for the moment, is in decline. Inequality is worse than ever, there is stagnation in large parts of the system, and it maintains profits by pumping out vast amounts of oil and gas—thus dooming industrial society. The unhappiness and discontent of large sections of the lower middle class and white working class has reached dangerous proportions. People are looking for solutions. Without a significant radical movement, these layers of the population look to the far-right. They are open to blaming Latinx and Muslim immigrants for their problems. They become willing to listen to demagogues such as Trump, who promise to lead them to a mythical land of white supremacy, Christian dominance, and patriotic greatness.

How a few radicals, of various persuasions, vote or do not vote in November is not the important issue. The question is whether it is possible to develop an independent movement of movements, of the working class and all those oppressed and threatened by this disastrous system, to oppose the

capitalists, their establishment, their state, and all their systems of oppression. It is whether a revolutionary anti-authoritarian wing of these movements can be organized to fight for a free society.

Photo by [Ernie Journeys](#) on [Unsplash](#)

From Embers: Five Years After The Brawl At Hamilton Pride

August 13, 2024

Anarchist radio show and podcast *From Embers* speaks with former political prisoner Cedar on the five year anniversary of the confrontation between far-Right anti-LGBTQ+ bigots and attendees at Pride in Hamilton, ON.

Five summers ago on June 15th 2019, a group of homophobic "street preachers" and their [white nationalist](#) allies attempted to enter and disrupt the annual Hamilton Pride celebrations at Gage Park.

Based on experience the previous year at Hamilton Pride and elsewhere in southern Ontario, anarchists and radical queers were expecting this and had organized to counter them. Wearing pink t-shirts over their faces and carrying a 30' wide 9' tall black banner nicknamed the Black Hole, the Pride Defenders confronted the bigots and formed a wall between them and the Pride festival.

The situation in the park quickly escalated into an all-out brawl, with several Pride Defenders sustaining serious injuries. Despite the chaotic scene, the [banner held](#) and the haters accepted a police escort out of the park.

Much of the fight was captured on right-wing [livestreams](#) and it created an immediate political scandal. The Pride Committee blamed the police for failing to intervene and the Police Board announced an independent investigation. For their part, the Hamilton Police attempted to [frame the anarchists](#) as

outside agitators, attempting to link the (relatively popular) Pride Defence to the (very publicly unpopular) [Locke Street affair](#) from the previous year, where anarchists had smashed windows of gentrifying businesses along Locke Street.

Anarchists who were still on conditions related to that earlier demonstration were [targeted and arrested](#) in the days following. Our guest today, Cedar, had her parole pulled ostensibly for participating in the fight - when it became clear that she wasn't even at Gage Park that day, the narrative changed to one of "incitement."

The police strategy to regain control backfired and the repression kicked off a month-long campaign to [Free Cedar](#) and drop the charges against all Pride Defenders. The city was covered in graffiti and posters and there were several rowdy anti-police demonstrations, along with [solidarity actions](#) around the world. For in-depth analysis and coverage during this time, see our show notes for links to various statements and reports on North Shore as well as our two [previous episodes](#) on the topic.

Today we're sharing an interview with Cedar for the five year anniversary of the brawl and its aftermath. We discuss some of the ways anarchists in Hamilton have tried intervening in Pride over the years, the [independent report](#) and [police recuperation](#), the problem with [hate crime legislation](#), the worrying increase in anti-queer and anti-trans attacks from the post-Convoy far right in Canada, a predicted wave of reaction following [the next federal election](#), and what we can do now to start preparing and practicing community defence.

Report on Black Rose Anarchist Federation 10th Anniversary Party

August 13, 2024

Report from 10th anniversary

celebration for the Black Rose Anarchist Federation. Originally posted to *Indybay*.

by Hank Pellissier

Black Rose / Rosa Negro (BRN) Anarchist Federation celebrated their 10-year anniversary in an old fire station in downtown Oakland on Saturday, August 10. The event, attended by 80-100 people, opened with explanatory presentations by four comrades, and concluded with a DJ Dance Party. BRN's goal was recruitment of new members, an intention surely realized by the enthusiastic sign-up of dozens of attendees.

Revolutionary struggle requires "long and patient work" emphasized the speakers. "This is a marathon not a sprint." Defining their goal as attainment of "a world free of domination" the quartet clarified the difference between direct action ("reacting quickly with moral outrage") and organizing ("sinking roots into longterm relationships") and emphasized "the need to do more organizing than activism" to avoid "running from one crises to another." Similarly, BRN's speakers talked about moving away from actions that only served a "symbolic" purpose; opting instead for militant strategies like withholding labor and refusing to pay rent.

Recent successes and failures - at a North Carolina high school and the Stanford encampment for Israel divestment - were relayed, with the positive message that every effort is useful because they always "build skills" in the participants.

Organizing unions non-ideologically around shared interests were explained as essential for success. "We even work with Democrats," joked one speaker, who later admitted that allying with genocidal Zionists was beyond challenging. Forming solidarity between blue collar and white collar workers, and sharing power, were also defined as top priorities. These ideals were expressed in BRN's goal to democratize a union, putting power back in the hands of the rank and file so they wouldn't get sold out by

administrators.

Numerous pamphlets were distributed free to attendees, explaining the group's strategy and tactics. Anyone interested in joining was encouraged to examine information on their website <https://blackrosefed.org/>

The Election Cycle as Counter-Insurgency

August 12, 2024

It has been four years since a deadly pandemic ripped through the social terrain and the George Floyd uprising brought millions out into the streets, as those in power responded by telling us all to go back to work and sending in the National Guard. Months later, tens of thousands of Trump supporters, Proud Boys, and militia members attempted to install an internet troll as emperor.

Since then, the government has rolled back safety nets put in place during the pandemic, attempted to forestall an economic crisis while another tech bubble seems poised to burst, and rising inflation and price gouging has led to record corporate profits and increased anger and anxiety. In short, there should be *no wonder* why a deep pessimism has permeated in the face of what the two ruling parties have offered up this election cycle.

But while history will remember this year as a time when much of the country simply shrugged when a former president was shot by a member of his own party and a deeply unpopular incumbent was pushed out in the face of mass dissatisfaction, hidden from the headlines and the toxicity of the pundit class is both the worsening conditions of *our lives* and the attempt by the capitalist State to manufacture a narrative that not only distracts from the deepening crisis, but attempts to proclaim that the very system which accelerates it *has a future*.

Trump proclaims, again, that if he wins we'll all be rich. The Democrats tell us we already are.

Running From Policy

We're told so often that "we live in a democracy," some of us forget that we actually don't. What is up for offer from the ruling parties is not an organic expression of the will of the people, but instead an attempt at popularizing an operating system for a social order that is in deep crisis. Those that seek to rule us have no desire to even address, let alone fix, the material structural problems which permeate our lives. "Vibes" aside, the nausea produced by the current race has led to a deafening roar of mass nihilism, as we all doom scroll through the slow collapse of this civilization.

The scenes are different, but all speak to a drastic reactionary lurch happening within the ruling institutions of this society. The leader of the Teamsters union speaks at the RNC amid calls for the military to carry out mass deportations and with a straight face heralds the party as a friend to workers. White boomers hold up signs reading, "Mass Deportations Now!", and the Democrats respond by openly declaring that they will in fact be *even more draconian* at the border than Trump. Meanwhile millions of so-called "progressives" organize to "do the work" over Zoom calls, as families in Gaza watch as their children explode in Israeli airstrikes and the Democratic governor of California helps police evict a homeless encampment.

And here in lies the greatest irony of all: while both parties say they are "running on policy," by and large, their *actual positions* are not that *popular*. While in 2020, Harris attempted to appear as a bridge between the Dollar Store social democracy of Bernie Sanders and the Center-Right neoliberalism of Biden, by 2024, Harris had already walked back calls for things like universal healthcare, which of course, actually has mass support. There are many other examples, from turning their back on trans and LGBTQ+ rights, pushing for continued border militarization, and pivoting from calling for a version of the Green New Deal to pushing "cap and trade" schemes to shield corporations from climate

After nine months of genocidal violence in Gaza, Benjamin Netanyahu received a standing ovation from the United States congress as he described the slaughter of over 40,000 Palestinians as "a clash between barbarism and civilization" and promised US politicians that "our victory will be your victory."

Regardless of political affiliation, those who justify US support for the genocide in Gaza and identify with the militarized colonial project behind it are doing more to pave the way for fascism than Donald Trump or his supporters could ever do alone. By cheerleading these atrocities, they are normalizing the kind of bigotry and brutality that are essential to authoritarianism.

<https://crimethinc.com/Encampmen>

What is done to others today could be done to us tomorrow.

Fighting for the lives of Palestinians is a way of fighting for freedom everywhere.



CrimethInc. Ex-Workers
@CrimethInc@todon.eu • Jul 24

From the text about the collective defense against the J20 charges:

"Let us pause in awe at the stupefying hypocrisy of those who profess to believe in the 'rule of law.' How can it be that the prosecutor, the court bureaucracy, and two grand juries were permitted to terrorize two hundred defendants with multiple nonexistent felony charges for nearly a year? Surely, if anyone is still naive enough to earnestly believe in the rule of law, they should consider those who are complicit in pressing nonexistent charges to be the number one threat to civil society. Prosecutors, police, and judges neither believe in nor uphold the rule of law any more than the most iconoclastic anarchist does. The difference is that anarchists are honest about this and propose an ethical alternative, whereas the professionals of the justice industry shamelessly pursue personal gain and little else."

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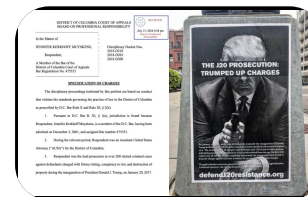
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Jennifer Kerkhoff, the prosecutor who attempted to put over two hundred people in prison for decades for the supposed crime of wearing black on the day that Donald Trump became president, is now facing charges for some of the false statements, misrepresentations, and omissions she committed in the course of prosecuting them.

No justice ever comes from the criminal justice system. But whenever lawyers and judges set out to intensify the ways that the system is used to target ordinary people, we should do our utmost to ensure that they fail.

To learn more about the collective defense strategy that defeated the J20 charges:

<https://crimethinc.com/J20legal>



CrimethInc. Ex-Workers
@CrimethInc@todon.eu • Jul 24

"How do you feel about people who would say that direct action, shutting off the streets to traffic and so on, is really not a democratic way to go on? What would you say to that?"

"I don't agree with democracy, anyway, because democracy is about handing your power over to other people, it's still about a minority of people controlling the lives of everyone. Direct action is really simple, it just means taking control of your life, taking your freedom, which comes with your responsibility and your self-awareness and your awareness of your impact upon other human beings."

<https://crimethinc.com/ReclaimtheS>



CrimethInc. Ex-Workers
@CrimethInc@todon.eu • Jul 19

"Nothing is more dangerous for man's [sic] private morality than the habit of command. The best man, the most intelligent, disinterested, generous, pure, will infallibly and always be spoiled at this trade."

-Mikhail Bakunin

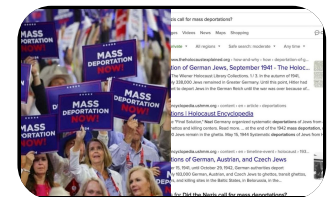
<https://crimethinc.com/BidenDoom>



CrimethInc. Ex-Workers
@CrimethInc@todon.eu • Jul 18

No words.

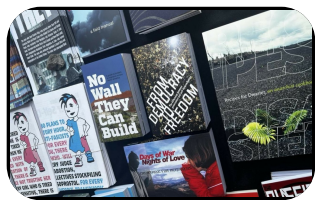
<https://crimethinc.com/borders>



CrimethInc. Ex-Workers
@CrimethInc@todon.eu • Jul 17

The pressure to immigrate to the United States is itself the consequence of US foreign policy and worldwide neoliberal economic policies that have impoverished millions, forcing them to flee war zones and economic crises. Soon, we will see even more people displaced by environmental disasters caused by industrially

https://black-mosquito.org/de/lesen.html?buch_autor=755



CrimethInc. Ex-Workers
@Crimethinc@todon.eu • Aug 7

Today, thousands of anti-fascists assembled around the UK to face down racist rallies. Most of the rallies never materialized.

Whenever fascists strike a blow, if we respond quickly and boldly, it offers an opportunity to draw more people into the struggle against capitalism, white supremacy, and the state. We must not let anyone imagine that the police will deal with fascists for us—on the contrary, they are a much greater threat to freedom than any group of ordinary racists.

<https://freedomnews.org.uk/2024/01/right-weds-roundup/>



CrimethInc. Ex-Workers
@Crimethinc@todon.eu • Aug 6

This collection of reports from the UK offers a glimpse into the wave of far-right attacks sweeping the country and documents how police are targeting anti-fascists who seek to defend their communities.

<https://itsgoingdown.org/uk-mass-community-defense-far-right-attacks/>

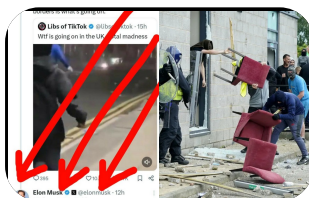


CrimethInc. Ex-Workers
@Crimethinc@todon.eu • Aug 5

The wave of racist attacks taking place around the UK is, in part, the consequence of right-wing billionaires acquiring control of social media. After Elon Musk bought Twitter, he reinstated the accounts of Tommy Robinson and many other fascists. One of Tommy Robinson's key henchmen posted the video that contributed to setting off this wave of attacks. Musk has continued to stoke the fires.

While liberals may respond by calling for more crackdowns on "extremism" on social media, such crackdowns would inevitably target the anti-fascists who represent the last line of defense against despotism. Instead, let's start by asking what billionaires like Elon Musk stand to gain from scapegoating immigrants and promoting civil war, then consider what it will take to stop them.

<https://crimethinc.com/twittercanan>



CrimethInc. Ex-Workers
@Crimethinc@todon.eu • Jul 29

124 years ago today, Gaetano Bresci, an Italian anarchist who had already risked his life to save Errico Malatesta from an assassination attempt, sacrificed his life to impose consequences on the king of Italy for the deaths of hundreds of poor working people.

Under interrogation, he insisted that he acted alone, and said:

"I'm sure I was not wrong to do what I did. I do not even intend to appeal. I appeal only to the next proletarian revolution."

In his honor, we produced our first singing zine (sound on!). This particular zine performs "Alla stazione di monza," one of several traditional Italian songs about Bresci's courageous act of self-sacrifice.

You can read our biography of

Bresci here:

<https://crimethinc.com/bresci>

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CrimethInc. Ex-Workers
@Crimethinc@todon.eu • Jul 26

A week and a half after we published this text, the Democrats finally compelled Joe Biden to withdraw from the 2024 presidential race. But our argument stands—not just because it took almost a month for Biden to withdraw, and not only because he simply passed the torch to Kamala Harris, who represents the same policies and the same ossified bureaucracy as Biden, but because all the problems we face remain as intractable as they were before he dropped out.

If democracy is so fragile that it could be abolished as the consequence of a single election, then it was already bankrupt—it was never a means by which to secure and defend the self-determination that everyone deserves. We need something more ambitious and resilient. We need a movement capable of facing down fascism as well as forcing out anyone else who tries to rule over us. We need a set of values, organizing principles, and strategies that can keep us oriented through the nightmare that is undoubtedly ahead.

A real solution would not change who the Democratic candidate for president is—it would render it irrelevant.

<https://crimethinc.com/BidenDoom>



CrimethInc. Ex-Workers
@Crimethinc@todon.eu • Jul 25

fallout.

And despite Biden being pushed out of office in large part due to his unwavering support for the ongoing genocide in Palestine, the Democrats, while also rolling back COVID relief and healthcare protections, continue to fast-track billions in weapons and military aid to Israel. Cutting funding to Israel would swiftly end the war, which is deeply unpopular, especially among the Democratic base, yet the party remains deeply committed to supporting Israel's continued genocide. In short, many progressive voters are putting hopes in Harris being in fact *something she is not*.

Ironically, one of the largest co-signers of this continued rightward shift has in fact been Bernie Sanders and "the Squad", who not only threw their support in with Biden, pushing back against growing calls to remove him, but have continued to fulfill their role, much like Kid Rock and Hulk Hogan in MAGA world, as a hype-man to the DNC, attempting to excite young people, the Left, and low-wage workers about a ticket that has by and large, abandoned any assemblage of "progressive" policy.

Thus, less than a decade after the Democratic Socialists of America (DSA) began a project of mass entryism into the Democratic Party, succeeding in gaining almost 100,000 members and getting several high profile candidates elected into office, the end result has by and large been a continued move to the Right. There is a word for this: *recuperation*.

Meanwhile, on the MAGA side of the street, Trump has attempted to piece together a campaign by building a brand around simply *not being Joe Biden*. But Trump has also gone to great lengths to obfuscate his policy proposals, insofar as he has them. This has been the most apparent in his attempt to re-imagine the overturning of Roe v. Wade as a way to "send it back to the states." But abortion is only part of a bigger issue for Trump, as popular opinion against Project 2025 has deeply soured, leading Trump to disavow the massive set of policy

proposals produced by members of his former administration and backed by many of his most loyal subjects.

In short: Trump and the wider MAGA movement - in all of its factions - are attempting to sell themselves as a "better boss" for the country, while running from their very real and very unpopular plans for establishing a corporatized Christian theocracy. At the same time, the Democrats are lurching to the Right, while attempting to brand themselves in the baptism of "good vibes" rising from the base, which largely have materialized through the mirage that the Harris ticket is in fact *progressive*.

The recent response from Trump to a question about skyrocketing rent costs which has gone viral over the past week illustrates this point. Responding to a question from an attendee at the Sturgis motorcycle rally, Trump, speaking over the phone to a reporter at *Fox News*, replied that he would increase the amount of oil drilled, claiming that expanded petrol production would bring down energy costs and thus, lower the price of goods. Putting aside the fact that Trump is a real-estate tycoon and from the class of people who are literally *creating* the current housing crisis, the rise in the cost of everyday goods is driven chiefly by price gouging. And, since the 1970s, wages have been flattening while the cost of rent has risen astronomically. In short, more oil production won't bring down the cost of goods - but it will continue to make Trump and those of his class, very rich.

Even more ironically, despite running a platform that in theory at least addresses the *existence* of climate change, the Biden administration has pushed for more oil drilling than ever before, as the US now leads the world in oil production. But of course, the Democrats don't like to speak to this reality, at least to their base, who actually cares about the threat of climate change.

Both parties aren't running on anything. Instead, they're telling us a story they think *we want to hear*.

Signs of a Deep Rot

It's no surprise that after nearly a decade of intense struggle: mass strikes, uprisings, riots, mass mobilizations, the occupation of buildings, and growing mutual aid networks, the ruling class has come to embrace a set of increasingly reactionary and neofascist ideas. The political order wholesale has continue to move far to the Right.

There are differences. Just like during the civil rights era, where those on the Right attacked the movement as a stepping stone to "communism," in today's landscape, the "war on woke" is seen as a block against growing anti-capitalist sentiment and self-organization from below. Meanwhile, the neoliberals take a different route, putting pronouns in their Twitter bios and posing for choreographed "take a knee" photo-shoots while sending in the National Guard against protesters. One side pushes conspiracy theories about Martin Luther King, Jr., the other quotes him while indicting bail funds on RICO charges.

As we step back and look at the electoral political landscape, we see this reality come into focus. The Democrats are carrying out a genocide in Palestine while campaigning to the right of the GOP on immigration. Harris placates protesters while hinting at a possible ceasefire, as children huddling in bombed out schools are murdered en masse in Gaza. At a campaign rally, Trump shouts-out white nationalist influencers and touts his Vice Presidential pick who is financed by reactionary Silicon Valley billionaires and influenced by Alt-Right podcasters who literally advocate for a monarchy.

Meanwhile, the largest third party in the US, the uber-capitalist Libertarian Party, which is controlled by the far-Right Mises Caucus, is largely backing Trump, as RFK Jr., the most popular third party candidate, advocates an escalated assault on Gaza and cultivates support among crunchy Qanon stans and anti-vaxxers.

The ruling class is hoping to bury the uptick in class struggle over the

past decade using everything from conspiracy charges to conspiracy theories. The message to partisans of the mass eruptions of popular anger and action that have exploded over the last few years against capitalism, white supremacy, and war should be clear: we can't win at this game.

The feeling held by many that both major political parties do not represent their interests *is correct*. Our true power lies in our ability to organize and act outside of the established State system, in our own interests.

Influencers of the World, Unite

Just as we have come to expect, the liberals and so-called “socialists” of groups like Party for Socialism and Liberation (PSL) are all rushing toward the electoral spectacle. Some of these groups, specifically liberals, are repeating the line that American institutions are the only way to defeat authoritarianism, as long as the people they like are the ones giving the police their orders. The “socialists,” which are just reformist liberals with red flags, have become a parody of themselves; embracing electoralism, with increasingly absurd arguments about “visibility” to back them up as they run their hopeless, wasteful, Quixotic campaigns for president. Not only are all of these attempts repetitions of failed movement strategies of the past, not only do they rely on approaches that give our power away to others, but these are all approaches which engage the state at its point of greatest strength, and at the point of our greatest weakness.

Not to be out done, much of the online Left is lining up lock and step behind the Democratic Party. Progressive streamers like David Pakman applaud Vice President Harris “shutting down” so-called “hecklers” who would dare to remind us of dead Palestinians. “Socialist” streamers like Vaush call the current Democratic ticket “based,” as everything is reduced to pumping out viral click-bait and online content, which for streamers amounts to actual dollars. *Pathetic*.

To be clear: this is not a call for shitting on people excited about change. It is a reminder that we must intervene and say what *only we can say*. Instead of pretending we have a dog in this race, we should be pointing out how deeply flawed this entire spectacle is. Regardless of if we vote are not, more critically, we should be putting our energies into building new forms of popular organization, infrastructure, and action from below which can challenge and push back against the systems of exploitation and domination which are threatening life on this planet.

We should be centering the social movements and struggles which actually have the ability to improve our lives and communities and also point towards new forms of life. This work is hard, often dangerous, and won't win us many Patreon subscribers or YouTube followers, but it is the task before us.

The Task Ahead

Each cycle, political parties attempt to pull into their orbit antagonistic currents which seek to change society in an effort to gain power. Obama smashed the Occupy encampments and sent in the military against Standing Rock and then talked about the “99%.” Biden invoked the memory of Heather Heyer and the fight against fascism as members of his party applaud the indicting of Cop City protesters on RICO charges and the police assassination of Tortuguita in the Weelaunee forest. Now, Harris and Walz are making overtures about a ceasefire while the Biden administration continues to facilitate a genocide.

Every apparent nod to our demands is an attempt at recuperating the disillusioned back into the fold for another round of the same nonsense, where no matter who wins, we lose. What often seems as a betrayal of the “soul” or “values” of a party, system, or nation-state is simply the organization functioning as intended. The elite project of co-optation depends on short memory spans, distraction, and threats to keep voters returning to the trough of so-called representative

democracy every few years. For those feeling alienated by it all, *you're not wrong*. Trust yourself, not the pundits or the candidates. They don't care about you, why should you care about them? The difference is that they need you for their game to work, but you don't need them to get free.

Despite the allure of “vibes,” most of us know deep-down that regardless of who wins the election, as soon as they step into office, the mood will shift. Despite Trump's populist veneer, his loyalty is to himself and those of the billionaire class, while he attempts to carry out a deeply unpopular authoritarian program. Harris will continue to support the ongoing genocide by Israel, in the face of growing anger at rising costs and climate chaos. Just as under Obama, what manufactured “hope” people have placed in the possibility of a Harris/Walz administration will soon be dashed by the realities that *this is America*.

The question for those involved in autonomous social movements is, where will we be? Ready and poised, with networks of action, education, solidarity, and infrastructure - to engage those disillusioned, just as many of us once were, at the failures of the electoral system, or caught off guard, when it fails to deliver and functions, *exactly as intended*.

Photo by [Colin Lloyd on Unsplash](#).

The Opening Statement – Summer 2024

August 11, 2024

Announcing a new issue of *The Opening Statement* from Michigan Abolition and Prisoner Solidarity (MAPS).

MAPS is delighted to present the 21st issue of *The Opening Statement*, a free quarterly newsletter that features articles, poetry, political writing and opinion pieces, as well as other relevant pieces by non-incarcerated authors.

OPENING STATEMENT -



Columbia President Resigns in Wake of Crackdown on Pro-Palestine Campus Protests
Student organizers celebrated the departure but vowed to continue pressuring the institution to divest from Israel.

CrimethInc. Ex-Workers
@CrimethInc@todon.eu • Aug 14

We are heartbroken report the untimely passing of Luciano Pitronello, known as Tortuga, an anarchist from the territory dominated by the Chilean state.

Here, you can read some of Tortuga's writing and some recollections of him:

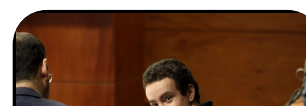
<https://crimethinc.com/TortugaVive>

In 2011, at age twenty-two, Tortuga was severely injured during an attempt to carry out an attack on a Santander bank in Santiago. The explosion resulted in Tortuga losing one hand and suffering severe damage to his other hand as well as his eyes, skin, and lungs. At first, it was unclear to what extent he would recover.

Demonstrating admirable determination, he survived the ordeal and exceeded expectations in the extent of his recovery.

In 2012, Tortuga was acquitted of terrorism charges and released from prison. After his release, he helped to establish and maintain the self-managed social center and autonomous library Sante Gerónimo Caserio.

Two days ago, while Tortuga was working in Santiago, he came into contact with electrical cables and was killed by an electrical shock. This tragedy illustrates that the most dangerous thing is not resistance—it is ordinary life at the mercy of capitalism. We honor all of the ways that Tortuga contributed to the struggle for a better world, not least the example that he set in confronting hardship.



CrimethInc. Ex-Workers
@CrimethInc@todon.eu • Aug 12

Today marks seven years since Heather Heyer lost her life while standing up to fascists in Charlottesville. We honor Heather's courage and the courage of all the others who knowingly put themselves in harm's way that day for the sake of protecting others.

In 2024, the site of the attack remains a place of memory, mourning, and calls to resist.

<https://crimethinc.com/Charlottesvil>



CrimethInc. Ex-Workers
@CrimethInc@todon.eu • Aug 11

Charlottesville Revisited—2017 to 2024

A review of the resistance to the “Unite the Right” rally, drawing on the recollections of some of those who were on the front lines.

<https://crimethinc.com/Charlottesvil>

Seven years ago, anti-fascists converged in Charlottesville, Virginia to oppose the “Unite the Right” rally, which brought together Klansmen, neo-Nazis, far-right militias, and fascists from the so-called “alt-right” aiming to build a unified white supremacist movement.

A few hundred brave people set out to stop them. The anti-fascists were outnumbered, underprepared, and terrified.

It's important to remember this today—first, because the Trump era still isn't over. As exhausting and demoralizing as it is, we still face the same threats and challenges we confronted seven years ago, and the outcome remains as uncertain today as it was then. Revisiting these events illuminates the stakes of the struggles before us now.

At the same time, the outcome of

the events in Charlottesville shows how much a small number of courageous people can accomplish by putting their lives on the line when it counts, even when victory seems impossible.



CrimethInc. Ex-Workers
@CrimethInc@todon.eu • Aug 9

Ten years ago today, a police officer in Ferguson, Missouri murdered an unarmed teenager named Michael Brown. In response, for a week and a half, an ungovernable revolt raged as angry residents and their supporters used a variety of tactics including arson, property destruction, looting, and gunfire to keep police at a distance and impose consequences for the murder.

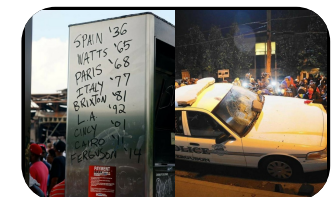
Most people outside Black and brown communities had no idea how frequently police murder people in the United States until these events forced the topic into public discussion. This set a precedent for subsequent rebellions around the country, culminating with a countrywide upheaval in response to the murder of George Floyd.

A timeline of the Ferguson revolt:

<https://crimethinc.com/FergusonTir>

A full account from one of the anarchists who participated:

<https://crimethinc.com/LootingBack>



CrimethInc. Ex-Workers
@CrimethInc@todon.eu • Aug 9

Trying to find our books in Europe? Black Mosquito finally has all our English titles back in stock, as well as the German versions.



"In Toronto's west end, tenants in at least four apartment buildings are currently on a rent strike, with at least one of those actions dating back to last June.

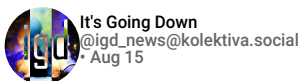
Dozens of renters in three high-rise apartment buildings in East York's Thorncliffe Park area have also been withholding their rent for more than year due to what they say are unfair AGI applications."

#RentStrike #Toronto

<https://toronto.ctvnews.ca/people-are-so-desperate-to-keep-their-rent-affordable-what-you-need-to-know-about-rent-strikes-in-toronto-1.6995320>



"People are so desperate to keep their rent affordable... what you need to know about rent strikes in Toronto
As rent prices have risen in Toronto, instances of tenants withholding rent in protest have become more common.



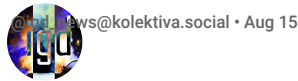
Don't miss our interview with Andrew Lee, author of, "Defying Displacement: Urban Recomposition and Social War."

<https://itsgoingdown.org/andrew-lee-on-displacement-rising-rents-and-social-war>



Andrew Lee on Displacement, Rising Rents, and Social War
On this episode of the It's Going Down podcast, we speak with Andrew Lee, an organizer and author of the new book out from AK Press, De...

It's Going Down



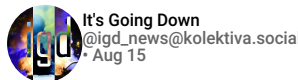
Russell Vought, key architect of #Project2025 and a former member of the first Trump administration, was recorded on an undercover video talking about how he not only wrote the recent #RNC policy platform but claims he has a direct line to Trump and white nationalist Steven Miller. States that if Trump wins, he will be a rubber stamp for Project 2025 policies.

Reaffirms authoritarian calls to use the military to deport millions and attack protesters, and make abortion illegal.

<https://www.commondreams.org/news/project-2025>

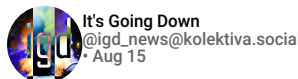
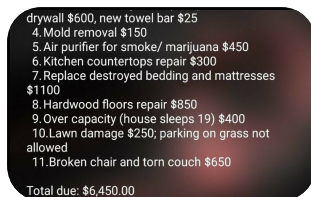


In Undercover Video, Project 2025 Architect Says Trump Is Very Supportive of What We Do | Common Dreams
A watchdog group secretly recorded Russell Vought, a former Trump administration official, explaining his plan to get confidential Project 2...



From @COSAntiFascists: "The owners of the rental property the Goyim Defense League used as a base of operations for last month's Nashville hate tour are threatening to sue Dominic DiGiorgio, the GDL member who rented the home.

The GDL apparently left weed, used needles, vomit, and blood in the home."



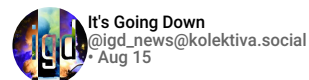
"This summer, around 400 people

found their way to a rural plot of land in eastern Pennsylvania to participate in the national Earth First! Gathering. Over the course of seven days, anarchists, abolitionists, environmentalists and more converged on Lenapehoking, the original name for the traditional homelands of the Lenape, the region's Indigenous people."

<https://unicornriot.ninja/2024/confre-climate-change-with-direct-action-hundreds-converge-for-44th-annual-earth-first-gathering/>



Confronting Climate Change with Direct Action: Hundreds Converge for 44th Annual Earth First! Gathering - UNICORN RIOT
Walking up the path to the Kirkridge Retreat Center outside Bangor, Pennsylvania in early July, you may have sensed something was afoot. Car...



"The president of Columbia University announced her resignation late Wednesday, months after she authorized a violent police crackdown on student demonstrators urging the school to divest from Israel over the country's devastating assault on the Gaza Strip.

Dozens of Columbia students were arrested and injured during a Shafik-approved police raid of a campus building in late April.

The Columbia chapter of Jewish Voice for Peace wrote on social media that students "will never forget the sheer violence unleashed upon us by Minouche Shafik, and we will not be placated by her removal as the university's repression of the pro-Palestinian student movement continues."

<https://truthout.org/articles/columbia-president-resigns-in-wake-of-crackdown-on-pro-palestine-campus-protests/>

SUMMER 2024 (CLICK THE LINK TO DOWNLOAD PDF)

ARTICLES AND AUTHORS LISTED BELOW:

- Do Children Have a "Right to Hug" Their Parents? Sarah Stillman
- Prisons Across the US Are Quietly Building Databases of Incarcerated People's Voice Prints George Joseph and Debbie Nathan
- Prison Phone Rates Set for Drastic Reduction Under New FCC Rules Paula Seligson and Ellen Schneider

Abolitionist greetings and happy summer!

The theme of this issue of *The Opening Statement* is digital surveillance under capitalism. We all know that states are always spying on us; cops and guards monitor, arrest, and infiltrate us; prosecutors investigate and frame us; corporations steal our data to make money off us; and so on and so forth. We also know that surveillance in all its forms can be extremely profitable: data about our phone calls, emails, credit card purchases, etc., are bought and sold to the highest bidder. And as the global crisis of the present intensifies in all its forms—resurgent fascism; climate catastrophe; hyperpolicing; militarization, and global war; poverty of the many alongside extreme wealth of the few—we expect all forms of repression, including surveillance, to intensify as well. As a result, we think it's worth taking up this theme again and thinking about what we can do to try to keep ourselves safe.

Prisons may be the place where surveillance by the state and corporations is most apparent. From the ground up, prisons are designed to monitor and control prisoners; they are trying to keep you all from talking to each other and building relationships, while also cutting you off from your families and supporters on the outside. The three articles we include in this issue look at the relatively ubiquitous communication technologies like

phones, tablets, and e-communications offered by companies like Securus (operated by a company called Aventiv) and GTL (which changed its name to ViaPath). According to a [recent article in The Appeal](#), these two companies "dominate roughly 80 percent of the U.S. prison telecom industry, forming an effective duopoly that thrives on the captive markets found inside the nation's lockups." They contract with 43 state prison systems and over 800 county jails. Their almost complete control of the market allows them to charge prisoners and families exorbitant rates for their services. Even if the products they sell are lifelines to the outside world, it's important to talk about the role they play in facilitating surveillance and in gouging their captive user base.

The first article, "Do Children Have a 'Right to Hug' Their Parents?," is an abbreviated version of a [long essay](#) that was printed in the New Yorker in May. It discusses something we mentioned in the news roundup of the last issue of *TOS*: the lawsuits against Michigan's Genesee and St. Clair counties for their deals with Securus and GTL that provide "financial incentives" for jails to eliminate in-person visits in order to force prisoners to use these companies' digital products. Not only do the companies charge prisoners exorbitant fees to communicate with their families, they also use prisoners as "experimental subjects" for the development of new surveillance technologies. The article explores the emotional impact of these policies on family members, especially children, who have been cut off from their incarcerated parents. It also describes some of the "surveillance products" the companies market to prisons.

The [second article](#), originally published in *The Intercept* in 2019, looks at the voice recognition technologies and voice-print databases developed by companies like Securus. These technologies help prison authorities monitor prisoners' private communications and map out communication networks to reveal who is talking to whom, both in- side and outside of

prison walls. One of the implications that the article points out is that this technology could be used to "coordinate crackdowns against prison organizing campaigns." Moreover, because prisons are often used as laboratories for behavior modification and surveillance tools before they are rolled out for the free world, this "new" technology will almost certainly be used sooner or later on both sides of the walls.

The [third article](#) looks at Securus/Aventiv and GTL/ViaPath from a financial angle. As a result of debts and the financial pressures of coming price caps, GTL/ViaPath is desperately trying to refinance its loans while Securus/Aventiv is trying to sell itself—if it can't find a buyer, it might have to declare bankruptcy. We see a few takeaways from this article: 1) corporations continue to exploit the growing market of prisons; 2) outsourcing communications to corporations benefits jail/prison administrators while ultimately harming prisoners and their loved ones; 3) even companies as big and as powerful as these have serious economic vulnerabilities that activists could potentially target; and 4) it's unclear how prisoners will maintain communication with their loved ones if these companies do collapse. We don't know how this will play out, but we'll be keeping our eyes on this.

On a related note, back in *TOS Issue 9 in Spring 2019*, we published an editorial explaining why MAPS doesn't use JPay (which is owned by Securus). If you missed it and would like to read it, write to us and we will send you a reprint. Sometimes folks write to us asking if we'll communicate with them on JPay instead of sending handwritten letters, and we totally understand the request—it can be easier, cheaper, and faster to send an electronic message. For us, though, the downsides outweigh the upsides. We see JPay as a way for companies to turn prisoners into profits and as a means for guards and administrators to more easily monitor prisoners' communications.

As always, we're interested in your

thoughts about these articles. What is your experience using communication services? Do these prices seem fair? Has the cost increased in recent years, and if so how much? Do you find something useful or worthwhile about these technologies in spite of their problems? What is happening with in-person visits in the prison where you're being held? How did the COVID-19 pandemic impact communications and surveillance?

And now for the news roundup. First, an [article by Paul Egan](#) in the May 13 issue of the *Detroit Free Press* describes an "employee database" that MDOC was required to create to log "complaints related to sexual assault allegations made against [guards] by prisoners." The article focuses on one officer in particular, who worked at Richard A. Handlon C.F. from 2000 to his retirement in 2019, and whose record was especially terrible, with more than 60 complaints against him. In spite of this, the guard in question was never disciplined by MDOC or interviewed by police. The evidence discussed in the article comes from a lawsuit on behalf of six current or former prisoners at Handlon who say that this guard sexually assaulted them. Unfortunately, because the article focuses so much attention on a single guard, it implies that the problem is one of "bad apples" rather than a structural feature of the prison system, which encourages this kind of behavior and ensures impunity. Actually, the article indirectly acknowledges that the problem does go beyond this one guard, when it notes that his "more than 60 entries" were "more than twice as many as anyone else on the list"—which suggests that other MDOC guards, who go unmentioned in the article, have been accused of as many as 30 sexual assaults! This only confirms that the prison produces sexual violence, rather than protecting anyone from it.

For [another article in the Free Press](#) published on April 18, reporter Violet Ikononova conducted a "first-of-its-kind" investigation into shootings by Detroit police in recent years. She found that, between 2015-2021, Detroit cops shot 30 people nonfatally, and a

third of their victims were never charged with or convicted of "the conduct officers said prompted them to open fire." In other words, the cops probably shot people and then lied about it. As Julie Hurwitz, a civil rights attorney who represented one of the survivors, told Ikononova, what the cops accuse the people they shoot of "is made up and is used as a justification for shooting them." The article also documents the fact that Detroit police have shot more than 125 people (fatally and nonfatally) since 2011, an average of around nine people per year, and none of the cops involved has been charged in any of these shootings. Is anybody surprised? We sure aren't.

On June 17, MDOC published a [press release](#) announcing changes to housing units at three prisons: Baraga, Chippewa, and Oaks. One of the changes is to reopen a Level II housing unit at Chippewa that has been closed (three more housing units there will remain closed); another is to transition a Level II housing unit at Oaks to Level IV; and finally, an 88-bed housing unit at Baraga will be closed. MDOC states that the closure at Baraga "reflects a continued decline in the state's administrative segregation population," but it seems like the main reason they are doing it is to address staffing shortages, since the closure will mean that "22.75 fewer officers" are required to operate the facility. Yet opening the unit at Chippewa will increase staffing needs by "10.5." Overall, they claim that "these changes will result in a net increase of 72 active beds in the MDOC." We thought this was important to highlight because MDOC administrators are always bragging about how the prison population is declining, but these changes seem to point in the opposite direction. If you're being held at one of these facilities, have you heard about these changes? What do you make of what's going on? How will they meet the call for increased staffing at Chippewa, which is already facing a staff shortage?

On July 3, the president of the union representing MDOC guards demanded that Governor Whitmer deploy the Michigan National Guard to "to provide immediate

custody support to prisons." [Paul Egan reported](#) in the *Free Press* that Byron Osborn, president of the Michigan Corrections Organization cited understaffing, excess overtime, mass resignations, and the removal of hiring incentives as justification for this dangerous demand. Unsurprisingly, Egan's article does not quote a single prisoner about how they feel about understaffing across MDOC or about what bringing in the National Guard would mean for them and their loved ones.

On May 13, the [Newberry News reported](#) that charges were officially dismissed against two MDOC guards who were involved in the 2019 death of John Lancaster, who was imprisoned at Alger at the time. The two guards were moving Lancaster from an observation cell when he died from extreme dehydration. They join six others who had been charged in Lancaster's death, but whose charges were dismissed last year. Once again, from the perspective of the state, it's no accident, no crime, when the prison kills—because it's doing what it's meant to. We extend our deepest sympathies to the family and loved ones of John Lancaster. Though we know true justice can't come from the same legal system that locks up our loved ones, we can't imagine how painful it must be to see an opportunity for accountability be dismissed this way.

Outside of Michigan, at Angola prison in Louisiana, prisoners have for decades been forced to do agricultural labor for little or no pay (the maximum wage is 2 cents an hour), even in extreme heat. On June 18, [reports Nick Chrastil for The Lens](#), lawyers representing Angola prisoners "urged a federal judge to halt operations of the Farm Line any time the heat index rises above 88 degrees." This month, the heat, exacerbated by climate change, is expected to soar to unsafe levels, exposing prisoners to "serious risk of injury or death." "When prisoners are forced to work on the Farm Line, they are rarely given breaks or drinking water and lack necessary equipment," their lawyers said. Also, many incarcerated people have medical conditions that make them

group.

This is what happens when the president of a labor union is held up as some sort of savior figure: he sucks. He goes out seeking personal fame instead of amplifying the voices of the members of his union.

The demonstrable fact that Democrats are a miserable excuse for a political party, and that unions spending so much money, staff time, and worker-leader capacity hasn't led to the results we need, isn't an excuse to go hang out with bigots instead. It means go do something else.

When Teamsters are organizing new members, like any union, they make sure workers know the union isn't some third party, like their bosses are claiming. It's not run as a dictatorship by a Hoffa any more, it's a democratic institution. The union *is the workers*, organized together.

That's the promise. Stop fucking breaking it. Stop throwing your LGBT workers, your workers of color, and any workers in solidarity with them under the bus.

Are you a rank-and-file Teamster, or any other union member, who wants to push your union to live up to its values? Or are you one of the 93% of private-sector workers not represented by a union, but want to organize one? [Join DSA](#), meet with other workers near you, and get trained. Either take Labor Notes' "Secrets of a Successful Organizer" training online, or in person with a group. It's how I went from being a retail worker who was technically in a union, but had no idea what it meant, to a union organizer.

Are you a DSA member who agrees that the Democrats being terrible is a reason to put our energy into something other than electoral politics? [Join our caucus.](#)



"Every apparent nod to our demands is an attempt at recuperating the disillusioned back into the fold for another round of the same nonsense, where no matter who

wins, we lose. What often seems as a betrayal of the "soul" or "values" of a party, system, or nation-state is simply the organization functioning as intended. The elite project of co-optation depends on short memory spans, distraction, and threats to keep voters returning to the trough of so-called representative democracy every few years. For those feeling alienated by it all, you're not wrong. Trust yourself, not the pundits or the candidates. They don't care about you, why should you care about them? The difference is that they need you for their game to work, but you don't need them to get free."

<https://itsgoingdown.org/the-election-cycle-as-counter-insurgency>



The Election Cycle as Counter-Insurgency
It has been four years since a deadly pandemic ripped through the social terrain and the George Floyd uprising brought millions out into the...

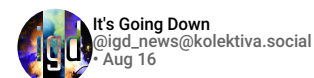


"When Donald Trump, contrary to the prophecies of the movement, lost re-election, networks of "Prophets" and "Apostles" were some of the main forces in galvanizing the January 6th Capitol riot. This act demonstrated the movement's willingness to seize power by non-democratic means and should be understood as a sign of things to come. The New Apostolic Reformation is changing America, and if we want to prevent them from achieving the power they desire, we have to understand them on their own terms."

<https://itsgoingdown.org/an-antifascist-analysis-of-christian-dominionism-and-the-new-apostolic-reformation/>



An Antifascist Analysis of Christian Dominionism and the New Apostolic Reformation
A critical analysis of the New Apostolic Reformation (NAR) and Christian Dominionism from Philly Fash Watch. The purpose of this text is to ...



"As the band tell it, they're four prisoners from a not-too-distant future who've broken out of jail and time traveled to the present to stop the climate apocalypse and the rise of fascism before it's too late."

<https://chicagoreader.com/music/qi-insurrection-running-down-walls-anarchist/>

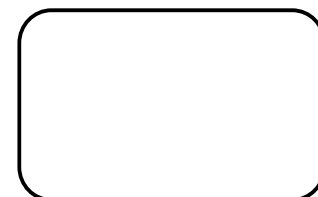


Making music to crack open prisons - Chicago Reader
Chicago band Glutton for Insurrection play to summon an anarchist future where everyone is free from capitalism and the carceral state.



Another Running Down the Walls event added - check out our list here.

<https://itsgoingdown.org/running-down-the-walls-2024-the-25th-anniversary/?swfpc=1>



Address:

Ronald Reed #219531
Minnesota Correctional Facility-
Lino Lakes
7525 Fourth Avenue
Lino Lakes, Minnesota 55014

photo: [Tiny Racoon on Twitter/X](#)

Cyprus Hartford Released from Federal Grand Jury Subpoena

August 1, 2024

Statement from Cyprus Hartford on her battle with a grand jury subpoena in so-called South Carolina. Read more background, [here](#).

On July 26, after a nearly two-month long ordeal, I was released from my federal grand jury subpoena by the South Carolina U.S. Attorney's Office. I'm so relieved that I don't have to appear in court. This would not have been possible if a supportive community hadn't had my back through all of this. I'm incredibly grateful for all the love I've received.

The State seeks to tear us apart because they know how strong we are when we stand together. The feds saw the show of solidarity you displayed for me and chose not to test our resolve. When we reach out to each other instead of isolating from each other, we have the power of community. Our support structures rival those of the State. Through generations of struggle and repression, we have built dual power in this way.

If they come for you and your community, I expect to be able to show the same support, love, and solidarity that you've shown me. Subpoenas can and must always be challenged. The coercive power of the State pales in comparison to the power we have when we stand together. We can maintain a wall of silence that keeps all of us safer. We are stronger when none of us cooperate. I've been fortunate to receive a lot of support from past grand jury resisters, and now that my ordeal is over, I'm hopeful to be able to pass on my experience to

those who come after me.

On August 12, there will still be a bonfire held near Charleston, but it will be a celebration. There will be s'mores and other traditional bonfire activities. Please consider acquiring an American flag for this occasion.

We are living in a new Green Scare. The federal government jumped on an opportunity to tear apart a target it perceived as weak, and when it faced even a hint of resistance and solidarity from across the country, it backed off. We have to be reaching out to each other, building connections across state and international lines. We win by putting our resources together. Our greatest strength is in our networks. We keep us safe.

With Love, Rage, and Solidarity,

Cyprus Hartford

It/they/she

There is No Such Thing as a Pro- Labor Conservative

July 31, 2024

Editorial from the Libertarian Socialist Caucus attacking the appearance of Teamster president Sean O'Brien at the recent Republican National Convention.

by Jesse M.

Like everyone on the Left, I see no difference between the Democrats and Republicans, so I have no problem with Teamster president Sean O'Brien speaking to the Republican National Convention.

Just kidding! I'm an anarchist, not a sucker.

While there were some cathartic moments in O'Brien's speech, where he lambasts Republicans for not supporting workers, it seems like a part of a larger project of his to try to create some sort of "pro-labor conservative." He said that an essay by noted dipshit Sen. Josh Hawley was "[100% on point](#)."

Hawley, one of those salt-of-the-earth pro-worker Republicans who didn't learn enough about the Common Man at Stanford and decided to take advanced courses on the subject at Yale Law School, had this analysis of American business in the piece O'Brien linked to:

"The C-suite long ago sold out the United States, shuttering factories in the homeland and gutting American jobs, while using the profits to push diversity, equity, and inclusion and the religion of the trans flag."

It's fun to call Hawley a dipshit (which is why I already have), but the unfortunate truth is that he's not really this stupid. He doesn't truly think corporate America is "using the profits to push diversity, equity, and inclusion," because profit is the money the investor class keeps for themselves, by definition. He was, at Stanford, a student of history; unfortunately, while some of us read history and see how fascists across Europe co-opted worker movements for their own purposes and thought, "wow! That's really bad," Hawley was reading it as an instruction manual.

"Pro-labor conservative" is a contradiction in terms. Being "pro-labor" means being an advocate for *all* workers, not a select, chosen few.

Hawley and O'Brien are trying to say that they're pro-worker... but not those trans workers. Not any worker who gets pregnant and needs health care, either. Not any workers who aren't Christian, and of the Christians, not the ones who immigrated here. Hawley [doesn't even believe in the right of public sector workers to unionize](#). America's largest union, the NEA, is in the public sector.

So that's your pro-labor conservatism: saying you stand for workers, but then sectioning off more and more workers until the slim remainder left are the cis, straight, white, male, USA-born (and only in private-sector workplaces). And we'd love to see O'Brien's organizing charts of the workplaces he wants to organize, like [Amazon, whose ALU affiliated with the Teamsters](#), when the only votes the union will get are in that

vulnerable to heat related illness—but they are not exempt from work on even the hottest days." According to the legal filing, "the officers who oversee the Farm Line used to ride horses, but no longer do. Prisoners contend that the practice was ended in order to protect the horses from the 'blistering' heat" (if this sounds like slavery to you, we agree). On July 2, a federal judge issued a temporary restraining order requiring prison officials to immediately institute a variety of protections from the heat for Farm Line workers. The broader class-action lawsuit to end forced labor altogether is scheduled for September.

We also wish to offer some updates from the global struggle against imperialism that is being taken up by colonized people across the world. In the last issue we wrote about Israel's ongoing genocide in Palestine, as well as the mass displacement, starvation, and war underway in Sudan and the Congo. The mass displacement and death in all of these places continue. In this issue, we turn to Kanaky, or so-called "New Caledonia," an archipelago of islands in the South Pacific between Australia and Fiji that has been under French colonial control since 1853. On May 13, 2024, protests broke out in the capital, Nouméa, after the French parliament passed electoral reforms allowing French residents who have lived in the territory for just 10 years or more to vote. These residents are, by and large, white and not Indigenous Melanesian or Polynesian people. This would tip the balance of local elections away from the 41 percent of Indigenous Kanak people living on the islands in favor of white residents, both those descended from earlier white settlers and this recent wave of European tourists-turned-residents. Though the French parliament claimed this move would "improve democracy," many Indigenous Kanak people see it as undermining their right to self-determination. Protests escalated into violent clashes in the capital city and throughout the territory between predominantly white settlers, settler-run police forces, and Indigenous Kanak youth, six of whom were killed. From 16,732 kilometers away, France closed the

Nouméa airport and deployed 3,500 French cops and soldiers to the city to violently suppress the uprisings. According to a report published on the French-language blog Sans Nom and translated into English by Abolition Media, many Indigenous Kanaky have been injured (although the French authorities are refusing to count them) and several "have lost an eye or have the bones of their faces shattered following police flash ball shots, others have gunshot wounds and are in a coma." Arrests and "disappearances" of Kanaky people have also begun to rise, with at least 726 people in police custody, 115 referrals to court, and 60 committal warrants since the protests began. Seven independence activists were not only arrested but also deported to mainland France for pre-trial detention. This has sparked protests in Paris as well, once again raising the colonial question in France.

But the protests are not just about voting rights—they're also about colonial capitalist mining. The Sans Nom report continues: "New Caledonia has a quarter of the world's nickel reserves, exploited in open-pit mines, to supply three pyrometallurgical processing plants. The first two produce ferronickel, a lower-quality mixture used in stainless steel, and the third produces battery-grade nickel (mainly intended for Tesla since 2021)." In the months leading up to the change in voting eligibility, France had been negotiating a "Nickel Pact" with the New Caledonian government in an effort to intensify the extraction of nickel for the French market. The politics of these negotiations are complicated: there are the interests of the French state, a fraction of Kanak elites loyal to France, and another elite fraction that favors independence and hopes to use extensive nickel mining to achieve it. But mining wealth has never trickled down to the Kanak poor and urban youth, who make up the majority of the rebels in the streets. Mining has also caused widespread environmental devastation, polluting rivers, increasing landslides, and exacerbating health problems. As a result, the rebels "are beginning to advocate an independence that would drive out the French state but also the

mines." Much like the situation in the Congo, which we discussed in the last issue, here too valuable minerals—in this case, nickel for use in electric vehicle batteries—are at the heart of this conflict, and they also explain France's desire to maintain its colonial rule over Kanak territory. More generally, in keeping with the theme of this issue, it's important to remember that the tablets, video kiosks, and cell phones we use day in and day out are powered by these minerals. Our devices aren't only surveillance apparatuses—they're also soaked in blood.

On June 18, 2024, Kenyan President William Ruto proposed a controversial finance bill that would have introduced higher taxes on daily items and services including internet data, fuel, bank transfers, bread, and diapers. The bill would also allow the Kenyan state to collect citizens' personal data from bank accounts and digital money apps, undermining digital privacy laws (surveillance capitalism turned into state surveillance). Youth in the capital, Nairobi, began to organize mass demonstrations. Protesters are fed up not only with Ruto, but also the International Monetary Fund (IMF) which has been enforcing resource extraction and austerity across the African subcontinent since the 1980s, under so-called "structural adjustment programs." In this imperialist scheme worthy of the dirtiest loan shark, impoverished nations are given loans under repayment terms they can never meet. Then the IMF dictates how the economy must run and how people can live—or more likely die. In Kenya, corruption runs wild while the IMF demands that the people suffer to repay the loans. Kenyan officials pay themselves at the highest rate relative to cost of living of any nation in the world. The youth have had enough.

In response to their protests, Ruto deployed the police who killed 22 protestors in a week, while over 50 people have been arrested. A Member of Parliament, outspoken in support of the protesters, was abducted in broad daylight. According to Al Jazeera, over 300 people have been treated and discharged from hospitals with

protest-related injuries. Some badass youth stole horses from the police, and others smoked tear gas like it was a vape (their lungs must be coated with diamonds). People stormed the Kenyan parliament and successfully drove police out of their neighborhoods chanting “we are peaceful!” Under popular pressure, Ruto announced on June 26 that he would not sign the bill, but youth continue to mobilize, demanding Ruto’s resignation in response to the murders of protestors. Protests spread from Nairobi to the cities of Mombasa, Eldoret, and Kisumu. Now, in domino fashion, there are protests planned, or feared, in Uganda, Nigeria, Zimbabwe, and other African countries that have suffered decades of imperialist oppression via the IMF.

As always, please write with any information you wish to share about suspended programming, parole board delays, new policies, mail and book censorship, staff shortages, difficulty in accessing programs, commissary inflation, and anything else you think needs to be shared. We’ve heard that some guards are messing with people’s halal meals—is this something you or anyone you know have experienced as well? If so, we would be very interested to hear more about what’s going on. We would also like to invite anyone who is an illustrator or visual artist to send us artwork that we might include in future issues. Some future topics and themes for TOS that have come up recently in our conversations and correspondence are prison infrastructure, the prisoner benefit fund, climate change, and analysis and critiques of the “good time” bill. What topics do you want to see us cover? What information or news do you want to read? Finally, would you or someone you know be interested in a Spanish edition of TOS, or figuring out ways to include some articles in Spanish? Write to us and let us know.

In solidarity,
MAPS

Photo by [Umanoide](#) on [Unsplash](#)

As Texas Antifascist

Found “Not Guilty,” Billionaire GOP Mega-Donor Reportedly Bankrolling Lawsuit for Fascist, Anti-Semitic Group

August 10, 2024

On Thursday, August 8th, Chris “Big Tex,” [was found not guilty by a jury in a criminal trial](#) on charges of “assault on a police officer,” following a mobilization in the spring of 2023 in [defense of a drag event at a brewery in Fort Worth, Texas](#) in response to threats from fascist groups.



Chris “Big Tex”

In a message to supporters on the [Free Tex](#) website, Chris wrote:

On April 23, 2023 the Fort Worth Police attacked me and beat me for standing on a corner and preventing Nazis from filming people entering a drag show. Hours after my arrest the police in partnership with the elected district attorney spuriously developed a claim that I assaulted them, a claim they did not mention across 24 reports and supplemental reports. The chief integrity officer of the county took a case that spanned 2.5 seconds of my life, to invent the largest of conspiracies: that I am a terrorist, the leader of a criminal street gang, that I paid people to engage in unlicensed security, that cleaning water off my umbrella was a “secret antifa signal,” you name it. She tried to cloud 2.5 seconds with two years of lies and the jury saw through it from the start.

I don’t want to mince words here. We watched for days as cops took the stand to lie, consistently contradicting each other and more wildly often misrepresenting and lying about the very things we were all watching together on screen. We watched as the accusations that Christian-fascists have long levied against me were methodically broken down to the lies they were. [Here is an archive of daily trial updates](#) for all four days. Please read, it is impossible to communicate the absurdity to anyone that wasn’t there.

After four full days of enormous tension Tarrant County sealed their fate when they marched a wall of cops into the courtroom to stare down the jury while they read my charge. After less than 45 minutes, I heard those beautiful words: *Not Guilty*.

I am eternally grateful to my legal team who saw this blatant political persecution for what it was from the start and their ferocious commitment to justice while helping me feel like a person who mattered throughout. I will never forget their righteous anger and commitment to the truth. I am so grateful to my wife and family both blood and chosen, whose unending well of hope and strength pulled me through the darkest days. I am so grateful to the journalist who spent every moment of those long four days in the courtroom alongside my family so my story could be told. And I am so grateful to the Quakers for standing at my side from beginning to end and keeping me level and centered.

I never wanted this to be about me, never wanted the attention or the soapbox, but I’m grateful for all that listened and pleased more than I can articulate to have the next twenty years of my life back.

The real danger has passed, but the lawsuit against me by [New Columbia Movement financed by their billionaire donor](#) is still very real and in that suit I am defending myself. I will be back in civil court on August 13th to defend myself once again and as

Federal Correctional Institution
PO Box 900
Ray Brook, NY 12977

[Matthew White #21434-041](#)
USP Terre Haute
PO Box 33
Terre Haute, IN 47808

[Matthew Rupert #55013-424](#)
USP Big Sandy
US Penitentiary
P.O. Box 2068
Inez, KY 41224

[José Felan #54146-380](#)
FCI Terre Haute
Federal Correctional Institution
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Terre Haute, IN 47808

[David Elmakayes 77782-066](#)
FCI McKean
Federal Correctional Institution
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Bradford, PA 16701

[Andrew Duncan-Augustyniak](#)
Smart Communications/PA DDC
Andrew Duncan-Augustyniak / QN9211
SCI Rockview
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St Petersburg, Florida 33733

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14813-509
FCI Fort Dix
Federal Correctional Institution
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[Alvin Joseph 1002016959](#)
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PO Box 668
Trion, GA 30753

[Richard Hunsinger 16066-509](#)
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P.O. Box 9000
Forrest City, AR 72335

[Diego Vargas 55070-424](#)
FCI Schuylkill
PO Box 759
Minersville, PA 17954

[Howard Eugene Nall #586907*](#)
Newberry Correctional Facility

13747 E. County Road 428
Newberry, MI 49868

[T’Andre Buchanan 67637-060](#)
Milan FCI
PO Box 1000
Milan, MI 48160

[Renea Goddard #22810-509](#)
FCI Aliceville
P.O. BOX 4000
Aliceville, AL 35442

[Aline Espinosa-Villegas #22814-509](#)
FMC Carswell
P.O. Box 27137
Fort Worth, Texas 76127

Address letter to Angel, address envelope to Aline A Espinosa-Villegas.

[Mujera Benjamin Lunga’ho #08572-509](#)
FCI Forrest City Medium
Federal Correctional Institution
P.O. Box 3000
Forrest City, AR 72336

Upcoming Birthdays

Bill Dunne

[Long-term anarchist prisoner held since 1979 for attempting to free another comrade from imprisonment.](#) Through the years Bill has also taught GED classes at almost every prison he has found himself at, helping many prisoners get their GED. Bill is generous, principled, full of integrity and has never wavered from his politics or convictions. Bill continues to stay active politically, helping edit and write 4Struggle Magazine, organizing the yearly Running Down the Walls 5K for political prisoners, and serves on the ABCF Prisoner Committee. [You can read some of his writings here.](#)

The Federal system uses Corrlinks, a system where a prisoner must send a request to connect to someone on the outside before they can exchange emails, so if you’re not already connected to Bill then you’re best off just sending him a card or a letter.

Birthday: August 3

Address:

Bill Dunne #10916-086
FMC Butner
PO Box 1600
Butner, North Carolina 27509

Hanif Shabazz Bey (Beaumont Gereau)

[One of the Virgin Island 3](#), serving 8 consecutive life sentences after being tortured into a false confession then wrongly imprisoned since 2001 when his sentence was vacated.

[Hanif is in an institution run by CoreCivic, and it appears that you can email him here.](#)

Birthday: August 16

Address:

Beaumont Gereau #19-1952
Citrus County Detention Facility
c/o Securus Digital Mail Center
Post Office Box 20187
Tampa, Florida 33622

Christopher L Young

[Queer anarchist prisoner/jailhouse lawyer in Kentucky wishing to start an anarchist book club and get more involved in organizing.](#)

Kentucky uses Securus, so you can send him a message by creating an account at [securustech.online](#), clicking “emessaging - launch account”, then searching his name while selecting “State: Kentucky, Inmate ID: 136515”.

Birthday: August 17

Address:

Christopher L Young #136515
Little Sandy Correctional Complex
505 Prison Connector
Sandy Hook, Kentucky 41171

Ronald Reed

[Black Liberation prisoner, convicted in 1995 for allegedly shooting a police officer in 1970.](#)

Minnesota uses Jpay, so you can send him a message by going to [jpay.com](#), clicking “inmate search”, then selecting “State: Minnesota, Inmate ID: 219531”.

Birthday: August 31



Finally, [Belly Zine](#) has new content [up about Black August](#):

This tradition began in the 1970's in California after the death of Black Freedom Fighter Jeffery "Khatari" Gualden at the hands of the administrators of the San Quentin death camp. To quote Doc Holiday, a comrade of George Jackson's, "Black August is a reflection and commemoration of history; of those partisans and leaders that realistically made it possible for us to survive and advance to our present level of liberation struggle." Over the decades, Black August has grown in popularity among people outside of prisons who love and support those who are locked down and living in direct conflict with the whiteness supremacist state.

Though we acknowledge historical facts, our tradition is not another Black History Month. We are not celebrating notable firsts, like the first Black person to do X, Y and Z and was therefore accepted by white america. It's not about those whose talents or ingenuity brought them closer to their oppressors. There is another month for that, if you care to celebrate peanut butter, or the supreme court, or baseball stats. In that (shorter) month people celebrate the contributions Black people made to a country that rarely compensated them and continues to treat most of them as disposable. In Black August we

celebrate those who stood against america and sacrificed for future generations.

Black August is about the kinds of resistance to white supremacy that is not limited by the bounds set by the ruling class and its collaborators. The terms and actions in revolutionary struggle are set by those in active contradiction with the enemy, and they resist as they see fit. As their courage allows. As their dissatisfaction dictates.

International

[An exhibition will be held in Stockholm, Sweden, from September 20th-22nd](#), featuring the artwork of a number of anarchist prisoners. [Unoffensive Animal](#) have published an interview with [Swedish animal liberation prisoner Sindre](#), as well as [a general call for people to support him as he faces an indefinite sentence with no clear end date](#).

In the UK, a defendant known as Katie is facing trial for having an abortion, and [you can send messages of solidarity here](#). [UK anarchist prisoner Toby Shone](#) has been facing increased censorship recently, and [British courts recently sentenced five climate activists to sentences of four to five years each for taking part in a Zoom call discussing a protest where a road was blocked](#). Freedom News has published [some analysis of the verdict here](#), along with [the latest installment of a prison diary from an ex-prisoner who served time for a direct action against the arms industry](#).

Palestinian prisoner solidarity network Samidoun has published [a new article on the French state's repression of Kanak defendants fighting against colonialism](#), as well as [a video on repression against the Palestinian solidarity movement in Europe](#). Samidoun coordinator Mohammed Khatib, a Palestinian refugee in Belgium, is facing [an attempt to withdraw his refugee status as a reprisal for his activism](#).

[An event will be held in Warsaw on August 24th to celebrate 15 years of the Anarchist Black Cross Belarus](#),

and [ABC Belarus were also able to interview antifascist ex-prisoner Kristina Cherenkova on her prison experience recently](#).

[A Spanish court has upheld a sentence of three and a half years for six members of the anarchosyndicalist CNT union for "coercion and harassment"](#) for taking part in rallies against a pasty shop.

As the Budapest antifascist case continues, [one defendant, Maja, was recently extradited from Germany to Hungary](#), showing the continuing collaboration between other European governments and the far-right regime of Orban.

The Anarchist Black Cross Federation have published [a statement on the passing of Tsutomu Shirosaki](#), a political prisoner who has died in the Japanese prison system.

[Warzone Distro has published a new interview with the Susaron 4](#), anarchist/animal liberation prisoners held in Chile.

Uprising Defendants

See [Uprising Support](#) for more info, and check out the [Antirepression PDX site](#) for updates from Portland cases. To the best of our knowledge they currently include:

[Tyre Means 49981-086](#)
USP Victorville
US Penitentiary
P.O. Box 3900
Adelanto, CA 92301

[Margaret Channon 49955-086](#)
FCI Tallahassee
P.O. Box 5000
Tallahassee, FL 32314

[Malik Muhammad #23935744](#)
Oregon State Penitentiary
2605 State Street
Salem, OR 97310

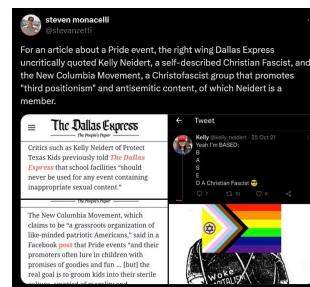
[Cyan Waters Bass #23905849](#)
Oregon State Correctional Institution
3405 Deer Park Drive SE
Salem, Oregon 97310

[Montez Lee 22429-041](#)
FCI Ray Brook

before, the truth will set me free.

I am beset with an overwhelming amount of expenses to recover from two extra days of trial, investigative prep, and expenses related to fighting the civil suit. If you're able to help, [please send a few bones my way](#).

One of the leading bigots who came out to protest the event was Kelly Neidert, a [self-described "Christian fascist" who has called for "rounding up" people who attend Pride celebrations and reportedly is a member of the fascist group, the New Columbia Movement](#). Neidert has [organized a variety of anti-LGBTQ+ protests](#), which have been attended by both [Trump supporters and outright neo-Nazi groups that have waved swastika flags](#). According to the [Daily Beast](#), "Kelly has also received support from former [Proud Boys](#) lawyer [Jason Lee Van Dyke](#)," who as [VICE](#) reported, attempted to [join the paramilitary neo-Nazi group the Base, only to be rejected](#).



Testifying during trial proceedings was Kyle Randle, a former member of the New Columbia Movement, who took part in the far-Right rally outside of the brewery in Fort Worth, TX. According to [Alexandra Edwards](#), who reported from the trial, Kyle is also suing Chris and "his co-plaintiffs are Joshua Finey and Anthony Long... [also former] members of New Columbia [Movement]..."

[Edwards went on to report that during the trial](#), it was revealed that [billionaire real estate mogul and Republican mega-donor Monty Bennett](#), publisher of [The Dallas Express](#), is in fact [funding the fascist group's lawsuit](#). Beyond massive donations to Donald Trump and

Texas Governor Greg Abbott, Bennett is most well known for [swindling tens of millions in PPP loans](#) during the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic and pushing a variety of attacks on the [LGBTQ+ community](#) and [public education](#).



Members of the New Columbia Movement shake hands with the leader of Patriot Front at an anti-choice rally in DC.

The New Columbia Movement is known for melding European fascism with authoritarian Catholicism and American nationalist symbolism. As Steve Monacelli wrote, the group [embraces a form of "Carlism, a semi-fascist Catholic pro-monarchist ideology, \[that\] emerged in 1800s Spain and played a part in Franco's brutal regime."](#)

A [Political Research Associates](#) reported:

In a manifesto published on its website, the group...calls the notion of equality — or at least what they consider "unnatural equality" — "evil," describes democracy as a "failed experiment" and advocates for a "Roman" model as the solution to "America's cultural diversity," in which "Subjugated peoples" would be allowed to "retain their personal culture," but only under "a High American Culture" based on "Christian morality, rule of law, and the common good."

In YouTube videos, New Columbia Movement leaders have referred to Elliot Rodger, the incel mass shooter who killed six people in Santa Barbara in 2014, as "the supreme gentleman": a self-aggrandizing term Rodger used in his last pre-massacre video, which has since become a common term of endearment on far-right forums like 4chan. Leaders also traffic in

antisemitism, as when one leader asserted on a 2021 livestream entitled "The Sexual Revolution and its Consequences" that Jews "do in fact have a very tight stranglehold on the porn industry" as well as "a huge hold on Hollywood." Another leader then added, "This can turn into a 'J.Q.' podcast real fast!" — a reference to the alt-right and neo-Nazi abbreviation for "the Jewish Question." Movement social media posts also regularly denigrate Jewish religious texts such as the Talmud, and one Instagram post captioned an image of ancient Israelite Jews as "the most dangerous enemy in the world."

In the group's first livestream broadcast in July 2020, its co-founders, SK Nicholas Chimera Jr. and Nicholas Haas — both of whom claim to be fourth-degree members of the Catholic fraternal organization Knights of Columbus — detailed their ideological journey to the far right. When the two met in college, Haas explained, SK "was borderline national socialist wignat" — a reference to an online neo-Nazi subculture — and frequented neofascist online forums, while Haas described himself as "basically the definition of a Three Percent militiaman." SK, who professed his admiration for the former fascist regimes in Italy and Spain, added that "both of our positions lacked God. That's the thing. Once we introduced God into it, we were fine."

Members of the New Columbia Movement [routinely rally alongside neo-Nazi groups](#) which [openly flaunt Nazi imagery](#). [Social media posts](#) made by the [New Columbia Movement](#) [push anti-Semitic conspiracy theories and directly attack Jews](#). In January of 2024, members of the [New Columbia Movement](#) [were filmed shaking hands and rallying alongside members of the neo-Nazi group Patriot Front](#) at an anti-abortion march in Washington DC. [Patriot Front is a re-brand of Vanguard America](#), a group which marched in Charlottesville in 2017, where a member of the group murdered antifascist protester Heather Heyer

after driving a car into a mass of protesters. Members of Patriot Front have called for [“ethno-state rape gangs”](#) and [filmed themselves giving Nazi salutes](#).



Texas Republican Governor Greg Abbott cheers arrest.

The fact that a billionaire capitalist and GOP mega-donor is backing a self-identified fascist group which pushes anti-Semitic conspiracy theories and rallies alongside neo-Nazi groups shows the degree in which the elites want to crush grassroots opposition to their anti-working-class and white supremacist policies.

Bennett’s funding of the New Columbia Movement’s lawsuit is also only the latest example of the Republican Party in Texas having direct links to neo-Nazis and white supremacists. In the fall of 2023, the [Texas Tribune](#) reported that “Jonathan Stickland, the ultraconservative leader of a group that has donated millions of dollars to high-profile Texas leaders, hosted prominent white supremacist Nick Fuentes and other right-wing activists [such as Kyle Rittenhouse] for several hours...” In May of this year, [Texas governor Greg Abbott also pardoned Daniel Perry, a far-Right Trump supporter found guilty](#) for the murder of “Garret Foster...in Austin, Texas, during a Black Lives Matter demonstration following the police murder of George Floyd in Minneapolis.”

This whole ordeal also exposes how the various forces, ranging from street level fascists, to the governor of Texas who tweeted his praise of

the police for arresting Chris, all the way to billionaires like Bennett who are financing a lawsuit for a literal fascist group and employing journalists at the *Dallas Express* who write pieces attacking antifascists - are all working towards the same goal: crushing communities standing together. It’s up to us to push back, showing that our solidarity is indeed, a weapon.

For more info on how to support Chris in his continued fight in court, [go here](#). Another comrade, Aeshna, is also fundraising for another case stemming from the same protest. [More info on how to support, here](#). For more updates on the upcoming lawsuit brought on by the fascist group the New Columbia Movement, [go here](#).

International Gathering of Anarchist and Antiauthoritarian Practices Against Prisons

August 8, 2024

Invitation to international anti-prison gathering in Argentina July 2025.

The importance of these types of gatherings, which lead to international and reproducible agitation, are essential for sharing experiences in the war against domination. To continue the initiative of the International Gathering of Anarchist and Antiauthoritarian Practices against Borders which was organized by compañerxs in Tijuana, Mexico, on this occasion the invitation is to reflect on our practices around the subject of prisons, taking into account the intensity and varied forms in which prisons inhabit us. Necessary to the antiauthoritarian struggle, it is essential to amplify our reflection on prisons and how they not only manifest in a determined time and space, but also how they are embodied in our everyday lives, even in nature and non-human animals.

Extractivism, speciesism, patriarchy, urbanization, punished bodies, coercion, technology, militarism,

colonialism, authoritarianism, etc. are just some of the practices that are reproduced inside prisons. We invite individuals, collectives, and other initiatives to share their continued antagonistic reflection and practice against prisons with conversations, contracultural projects, or audio-visual materials, graphics, or performances that relate to a thinking/acting against prisons. The intention is to map the role that prisons currently play in our imaginations, from the collective to the individual. We believe in the necessity to sharpen our ideas and practices, from an ethics of horizontalism, mutual care, self-organization, and autonomy, to confront the hegemony of power, from anarchist anti-authoritarian multiformity and anti-prison internationalism.

Information and a closing date for proposals will be updated as things develop.

encuentroanarquico@riseup.net

Encuentro Internacional de Prácticas Anárquicas y Antiautoritarias Contra las Prisiones

Argentina Julio 2025

Convocatoria

La importancia de este tipo de encuentros que lleven a la agitación internacional y reproducible son esenciales para compartir nuestras experiencias en la guerra contra el dominio. Es por eso que como continuación a la iniciativa del Encuentro Internacional de Prácticas Anárquicas y Antiautoritarias Contra las Fronteras realizada por compañerxs en Tijuana, México. Se retoma dicha iniciativa en esta ocasión invitando a reflexionar nuestras prácticas en torno a las Prisiones, tomando en cuenta la intensidad y las variadas formas en que las prisiones nos habitan. Pues como necesidad antiautoritaria es esencial ampliar la reflexión en cuanto las prisiones y como estas no sólo se concentran en un espacio o tiempo determinado, sino también estas como encarnan en nuestra cotidianidad hasta en la naturaleza y

incarceration, counted at least five other hunger strikes across the country over ICE phone access. At Golden State, porters had already begun a labor strike. For cleaning the facility, they earn \$1 per 8-hour workday, organizers said. They also protest for free phone access, improved hygiene and nutrition and an end to solitary confinement among other demands.

According to [a log collected by detainee advocates](#), current hunger strikers face retaliation — from segregation to the seizure of their legal materials. In previous years, protesters alleged through the ACLU that detention employees put them in solitary confinement for a month and performed sexually-abusive pat-downs after they participated in a hunger strike.

The private contractor GEO operates both Northern California facilities. The state banned new ICE detention contracts on government-run property in 2017. [GEO’s website](#) counts a total capacity at both sites of roughly 1,100 people.

Since the COVID-19 pandemic, the two SF-controlled detention centers have seen hunger strikes against unhygienic conditions. Through an ACLU class action lawsuit, protesters said they didn’t have enough soap, among other cleaning and protective supplies.

[Democracy Now! reports:](#)

Prisoners in Florida at the largest federal prison complex in the United States say they launched a hunger strike Sunday to demand external intervention to address health and safety violations, abuse of power by guards, and denied visits. A man incarcerated at the Coleman Low satellite camp told Democracy Now! 30 people were moved to solitary confinement in response to the hunger strike, and said they have since paused the protest. This comes as a Department of Justice investigation of Coleman led to more than a dozen arrests last week, including corrections officers charged with smuggling

in drugs.

La Resistencia also reports that [another hunger strike has kicked off at the NorthWest Detention Center in Tacoma, WA.](#)

The article “Pelican Bay to Palestine” by revolutionary Texas prisoner Monsour Owolabi has [now been republished by the Palestinian prisoner solidarity network Samidoun](#), who have also made it available as a printable zine.

New documents have exposed [the extent of ADL spying on left activists involved in opposing ties between US police and the Israeli state.](#)

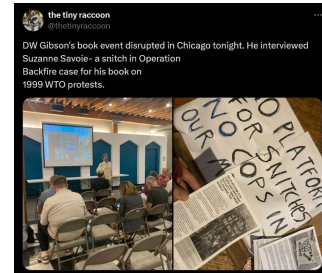


Unicorn Riot has published [a new interview on the case of Mahdi Ali in Minneapolis](#), as well as [a video on the wrongful conviction of Jermaine Ferguson](#).

Revolutionary prisoner Kevin “Rashid” Johnson continues to publish new writing, including [the article “White Privilege and the Revolutionary Struggles of People of Color”](#) as well as [new poems](#).

Supporters of the Pendleton 2 in Indiana have suggested [a number of ways to take action in solidarity with them](#), and [are raising funds for the campaign here](#). Imprisoned Texas writer [Jason Walker now has a new facebook page](#).

Prism has published [a new article by a Georgia prisoner on the extent of state violence in women’s prisons](#). New York prisoner Jared Bozydaj has written on [the lack of air conditioning in the NY prison system](#). A new report [exposes the extent of preventable deaths in ICE detention facilities](#).



[Texas prisoners are now dealing with an outbreak of tuberculosis at the Connally Unit.](#)

North Carolina Republicans are [attempting to bring in a new law that would make it harder for district attorneys to drop or reduce charges in protest-related cases](#). *Teen Vogue* has started [a new series, United States of Suppression](#), focusing on repression issues.

[The rapper BG, recently released from prison, has now been ordered to submit all his new lyrics for approval by the state before releasing them](#). Prosecutors are apparently keen to prevent BG from expressing “anti-snitch” sentiments in his music.

Truthout has broadcast [an interview with Dean Spade on how solidarity can falter amid repression and how to do better](#).

A lawsuit could lead to changes in the notoriously bad Louisiana prison medical system, but [the state is now looking to use the Prison Litigation Reform Act](#) to avoid making any changes and shut down any chance of improvements from the courts.

Also in Chicago, a book talk on the WTO protests in Seattle, was “disrupted in Chicago...,” due to the author interviewing “Suzanne Savoie - a snitch in Operation Backfire case...” Read more on [Operation Backfire, which was central to the Green Scare, here](#).

affirming medical care and for a transfer to a women's prison. Finally, in 2021, she was transferred to the Washington Corrections Center for Women (WCCW).

Three years later, this past March, Kim was issued a 504 disciplinary ticket for allegedly engaging in consensual sex with her girlfriend, a cisgender woman. (Sex, even consensual sex, is against prison rules.)

In June, three months after she was issued the disciplinary ticket, officers brought Kim out of her cell and told her she was being transferred to a men's prison. She asked to see the transfer paperwork. She also asked to speak with her lawyer. When both requests were denied, she refused to walk. In response, she told *Truthout* that guards threw her to the ground, hog tied her, and drove her the 70 miles to the Monroe Correctional Complex, where she was placed in the Intensive Management Unit, or solitary confinement. She was issued two tickets for allegedly refusing to follow staff orders and refusing a facility transfer.

In response, Kim went on hunger strike. She initially contacted *Truthout* nine days into her strike. While LGBTQ+ people across the nation were commemorating Pride with parades, protests and parties, Kim spent her single hour outside her cell in a concrete yard calling the media and trying her best to ignore hunger pangs.

Separately, a call has gone out for a phone zap in support of prisoners at Vaughn prison in Delaware, who are reporting torture and beatings at the hands of prison officers.

Antifascists in Texas are calling for "support [for] Aeshna "Protest Mom" in court, a street medic who was violently arrested last year in front of a drag show that was threatened by fascists. We're packing the courtroom to show Tarrant County that our solidarity is stronger than their harassment." See more info here.

General Prison News and Abolitionist Media Updates

This summer, a massive heat wave marked by wildfires and fueled by climate change is hitting prisoners hard. At the former slave plantation of Angola in Louisiana, prisoners are legally challenging through a class-action lawsuit extreme heat conditions as they are used as prison slave labor in fields surrounding the facility. From one report:

...Other Southern states also operate sprawling penal farms on former slave plantations. Modern equipment is typically used to tend and harvest row crops that are sometimes sold on the open market and exported, even though the U.S. bans the import of goods made with prison labor overseas. But in some places, like Louisiana's penitentiary, rudimentary tools and prisoners' bare hands are used to harvest fruits and vegetables that feed inmates.

...prison farms nationwide have in recent years supplied millions of dollars worth of crops — including soy, corn and wheat — to massive global companies like Tyson Foods, Louis Dreyfus, Consolidated Grain and Barge and Riceland Foods. Agricultural goods produced through prison labor end up in the supply chains of popular brands like Kellogg's Frosted Flakes, Ballpark hot dogs and Pepsi, reporters found.

Prison labor is legal in the United States due to a loophole in the 13th Amendment of the U.S. Constitution, which banned slavery, except for people convicted of crimes.

Some incarcerated workers say heat is used as a form of punishment, not just in the fields but also inside facilities. Many units across the country lack air conditioning, and some prisoners resort to flooding their cells and lying on the wet floor nearly naked to try to stay cool.

Prisoners in Texas facilities are also in the midst of a trial over extreme

heat and lack of air-conditioning:

Texas is not alone in facing lawsuits over dangerously hot prisons. Cases also have been filed in Louisiana and New Mexico. One filed last week in Georgia alleged an inmate died in July 2023 after he was left in an outdoor cell for hours without water, shade or ice.

Desperate women would fake suicide attempts, or "commit some harm" to themselves to get placed in a cooler medical unit, Simmons said.

A November 2022 study by researchers at Brown, Boston and Harvard universities found that 13%, or 271, of the deaths in Texas prisons without universal air conditioning between 2001 and 2019 may be attributed to extreme heat. Prisoner advocates say those numbers are only likely to increase as the state faces more extreme weather and heat due to climate change.

According to a report by KUT Radio in Austin, autopsy reports on at least three inmates deaths in 2023 mentioned heat a possible contributing factor. The Texas Department of Criminal Justice, however, has said there have been no heat-related deaths in the state's prisons since 2012.

Detainees held by ICE in Central California have begun a hunger strike, which comes on the back of work strike. You can learn more about the situation in this interview. One report wrote:

ALMOST 50 IMMIGRATION detainees in Central California began a hunger strike on July 11, escalating a work stoppage after detention center management cut off their once-free phone calls to the world outside.

As of July 22, roughly 10 people continue the hunger strike. Organizers said the strike specifics vary among protesters, some of whom take protein shakes or limit food consumption.

Detention Watch Network, an activist coalition that wants to abolish immigration-based

animales no humanos.

Extractivismo, especismo, patriarcado, urbanismo, cuerpos en castigo, coacción, cárceles, tecnología, militarismo, colonialismo, autoritarismo, etc. Son algunas de las prácticas que se originan dentro de las prisiones. Por ello, convocamos a toda individualidad, colectiva o iniciativa a compartir el continuo reflexionar/prácticas antagónicas contra las prisiones, conversatorios, proyectos kontrakulturales, presentaciones de material audiovisual-gráfico-escénico que gire en torno a un pensar/que hacer contra las prisiones. Con el propósito de mapear el papel en que actualmente se encuentran las prisiones en nuestro imaginario, desde lo colectivo a individual. Creemos en la necesidad de afilar nuestras ideas/prácticas, a partir de la horizontalidad, cuidado mutuo, autogestión y autonomía, para enfrentar la hegemonía del poder, desde la multiforiedad anárquica antiautoritaria y el internacionalismo anti-carcelario.

Información y cierre de convocatoria se irá actualizando

encuentroanarquico@riseup.net

UK Communities Mobilize to Defend Themselves as Police Fail to Stop Far-Right Attacks Spurred by Viral Misinformation

August 6, 2024

Following the tragic murder of three children, a viral campaign of far-Right misinformation pushed by neo-Nazi groups like Patriotic Alternative, far-Right grifters such as Tommy Robinson, and amplified by Elon Musk on Twitter, has led to a series of confrontations between the far-Right and antifascist community members across the so-called United Kingdom.



As the anarchist newspaper *Freedom* reported:

It was inevitable that the far-Right would exploit the horrific events in Southport. In the aftermath of the attack on a Taylor Swift-themed dance event, in which three children died and others were left in critical condition... Disinformation has swirled around the killings. In the hours after the attack, large social media accounts, including those of right-wing Xers Andrew Tate and Darren Grimes, stated that the attacker was either an illegal immigrant or a Syrian refugee. However, as far as we know, the UK-born attacker was neither. Other accounts, like the (literally) fake news site Channel 3 Now, were cited by conspiracy theorists and used to call for martial law and mass deportations...Today's far right is not dominated by one group. Instead, we saw an amorphous network of conspiracy theorists, anti-migrant activists, explicit fascists and hooligans mobilise from across the country.

Despite communities quickly mobilizing in the face of far-Right violence, racist mobs have taken to the streets "throwing bricks, setting fires, smashing windows, threatening mosques and attacking hotels housing asylum seekers" In one city, white supremacist rioters even set up check points to check the race of motorists passing through an area. In two horrifying instances, racist rioters set fire to hotels housing migrants, in an attempt to literally burn them alive.

As *Hope Not Hate* reported:

Sunday 4 August witnessed two arson attempts on sites of temporary asylum accommodation. One was in Rotherham, where close to 1,000

protesters overwhelmed a seemingly ill-prepared South Yorkshire Police Force before pushing a wheelie bin inside and setting it alight. The other was in Tamworth, where a mob stormed a Holiday Inn and torched the hallway, and sprayed racist slogans such as "fuck p***s" and "get out England" on the building.

In addition to Southport and Hartlepool earlier in the week, Rotherham, Sunderland, Hull, Stoke, Liverpool, Middlesbrough and Tamworth endured the worst of the violence...Bristol, too, saw ugly scenes as anti-fascists bravely positioned themselves between far-right thugs and the entrance to a hotel which was being used to temporarily house asylum seekers.

Elsewhere, other far-right demonstrations either failed to materialise or were dwarfed by antifascist counter-demonstrators. In the end, the far right were either heavily outnumbered or failed to show in: Cardiff, Doncaster, Wrexham, Swindon, Nottingham, Preston, Leicester, Torquay and High Wycombe, among others.

This week, following initial clashes, community defenders are organizing to hold the streets against continued calls by far-Right and neo-Nazi groups to violently target and attack "immigration-related charities, advice centres and solicitors," and there are signs that more far-Right demonstrations are being organized in the near future



A sLondon Antifascist Assembly wrote in a recent post to social

media:

In less than 24 hours we will all be on the streets in our local areas countering the racist, Islamophobic, fascist threats against London's people. It's still not yet clear how strong the far right presence will be in the majority of the places listed as potential targets for Wednesday evening.

The response from people across London has clearly been massive and the work which we have seen going on in community chats and organizing groups, has been incredible. We will all have to be on our toes tomorrow, as the police will be out in force, desperate to keep people under their thumb. Guides to your legal rights are circulating widely: read them, and be prepared to resist police bullying.

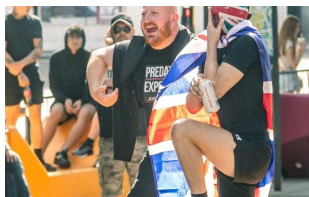
The situation is very chaotic and figuring out which bits of information are accurate, which are made up, and which are exaggerated will be tricky. Rumors of all kinds have been flying all week and tomorrow will see a lot of this. Be wary of misinformation and fascist trolling: Not only is it very easy to misread a situation and accidentally start a rumor, but also the far right will be building on the shock and fear created last weekend by exploiting peoples fears of acid attacks, stabbings, and arson.

Lastly, people going out tomorrow should remember that while organizations are a part of the fight against fascism, no single group or party can ever claim this movement as their prize: You are the ones doing this, you are the ones fighting fascism, and you are the ones who will eventually defeat it. Don't let SWP style figureheads or attention seeking liberal influencers claim leadership in the weeks and months to come.

Good luck tomorrow. The enemy is trying to scare us all into submission, particularly the most marginalised amongst us. Together we must all show them that London is Antifascist.

While these events are taking place in an area that normally isn't covered by *It's Going Down*, being that the US based far-Right is watching these events very closely, we think it is paramount to not only take note of what is happening, but offer material support and solidarity to communities under attack. Moreover, we know that the demonization of migrant workers, refugees, and asylum seekers - propelled by online conspiracy theories, policies of *both* corporate parties, and the mass media - is a core project of those who wish to protect and strengthen entrenched class and racial inequalities which lie at the heart of the capitalist settler-State.

Over the past several decades, we've already seen the militarization of the border, multiple horrific mass shootings by white supremacists under the guise of resisting the "Great Replacement" conspiracy, and elites and corporate media attempting to score political points by manufacturing a fictitious threat of "migrant crime." In short, what happens in England, may soon hit our shores here.



What follows is a collection of reports from anarchist and antifascist groups across the so-called UK, detailing mass community defense in the streets against the far-Right. As the following reports show, antifascist mobilizations, both by community members and organized antifascist groups, have directly saved lives, especially as police have been unwilling and unable to prevent attempts by the far-Right to carry out acts of extreme organized racist violence. For more updates and future reports, be sure to check out the [Antifascist Network](#), [Freedom, Red Flare](#) and the [Anarchist Federation](#).

August 2nd

Report from Sunderland from the [Northeast Anarchist Group](#) on August 2nd:

The scenes in Sunderland last night were horrific to watch, and the fact that the far-Right think they can be so bold is indicative of much needed antifascist work to be done.

On a slightly more positive note, members of the community and those who helped organise the callout stood in solidarity outside nearby Mosque's and the Sunderland Jami-Masjid, which almost definitely contributed to the far-Right being forced back into the city centre.

There is also a locally organised cleanup happening right now - we can and we will fight back, the police and the fascists are not our friends, only we can protect one another.

August 3rd

Report from [Manchester Antifascist Collective](#) from August 3rd:

The events of Saturday 3rd August took place in a climate of rapidly accelerating far-Right militancy. Before we address its specifics, we feel it is worth presenting our analysis of how this militancy has reached an arguably unprecedented level, at least in the last decade.

The current explosion in far-Right demonstrations follows the tragic attack in Southport that took the lives of three young girls and injured multiple other children and adults. Immediately, far-Right disinformation was spread in local Southport chats that alleged the attacker was a Muslim who came over on a small boat crossing, with neo-fascist groups such as Patriotic Alternative (PA) and the British Movement (BM) seeking to inflame tensions.

This disinformation was deliberate, calculated and

Khalif Miller #70042-066
USP Big Sandy
U.S. Penitentiary
P.O. Box 2068
Inez, KY 41224

South Carolina anarchist Cypress Hartford has been [resisting a grand jury subpoena](#), and recently [released a follow-up statement](#). You can listen to [an in-depth interview about her case on the Final Straw here](#). As this column was being put together, a [statement was released announcing](#):

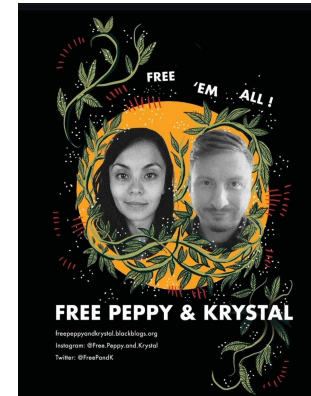
On July 26, after a nearly two-month long ordeal, I was released from my federal grand jury subpoena by the South Carolina U.S. Attorney's Office. I'm so relieved that I don't have to appear in court. This would not have been possible if a supportive community hadn't had my back through all of this. I'm incredibly grateful for all the love I've received.

We are living in a new Green Scare. The federal government jumped on an opportunity to tear apart a target it perceived as weak, and when it faced even a hint of resistance and solidarity from across the country, it backed off. We have to be reaching out to each other, building connections across state and international lines. We win by putting our resources together. Our greatest strength is in our networks. We keep us safe.

There's a variety of ongoing cases connected to the Palestine solidarity movement. Millions for Prisoners New Mexico recently shared [information on the case of Sihasin Hope, a New Mexico defendant facing charges connected to a Palestine protest](#), and [Blue Ridge ABC have put out a request for bail funds to help bail out defendants facing charges in Asheville, North Carolina](#). A post submitted to [North Shore Counter-Info](#) reports that [Toronto police are attempting to recruit confidential informants to undermine the movement](#), and the [Samidoun network has published a statement in solidarity with the CUNY 27](#).

[Stop Cop City defendant Priscilla Grim](#) recently published an article

[on surviving jail](#). You can find [more ways to keep up with her here](#), as well as [a general support campaign for Cop City defendants at Weelaunee the Free](#). Cop City defendant Larry Clark was recently released after several months in jail, and [there's a call to send post-release funds to \\$onlysolonas on CashApp](#).



[Kite Line Radio](#) recently broadcast a new episode focusing on the cases of [Peppy and Krystal](#), two Pittsburgh defendants facing charges for alleged actions against transphobia.

[After a long-running legal battle, the courts have finally defeated a lawsuit that aimed to hold protest organizers liable for anything that happened at the event](#), after a police officer was injured in a 2016 protest over the killing of Alton Sterling.

[Four people are still facing potential prison time in Florida for alleged Jane's Revenge graffiti](#), having now plead guilty to felony charges. While they await sentencing, [an anti-abortion protester has been given a non-custodial sentence for a breach of the FACE Act](#), the legislation supposedly designed to protect abortion clinics that's now being used to criminalize those fighting to defend abortion access.

[A benefit show for federal prisoner Randy "Smiles" Platt is being organized in Fort Collins, Colorado on August 17th](#). Supporters of the remaining Vaughn 7 prisoners have started [selling t-shirts to raise money for their commissary and legal funds](#).

Antifascists in Texas are calling for "support [for] Aeshna "Protest Mom" in court, a street medic who was violently arrested last year in front of a drag show that was threatened by fascists. We're packing the courtroom to show Tarrant County that our solidarity is stronger than their harassment." [See more info here](#).

Amber Kim Hunger Strike and Other Calls to Action

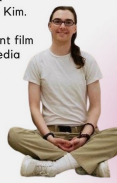
Amber Kim, a trans woman held in the Washington prison system, launched a hunger strike after being moved to a men's prison, [although she has now had to suspend the strike after threats to cancel a planned surgery](#). An event in solidarity with Amber is [planned for Seattle on August 12th](#). Her situation has been covered by [The Stranger](#), [Truthout](#) and the [Huffington Post](#), and [a blog has been set up to collect updates](#). There is also an upcoming in Seattle, WA at the Pipsqueak Infoshop on Amber's case.

LETTER WRITING & FILM SCREENING FOR AMBER KIM

Join us for a letter writing and information session for Amber Kim. We'll also view Abolition Film Society, a 2 channel short silent film collaboration between multimedia artist & organizer Kriss Li and Amber, followed by a Q&A.

Monday, August 12th, 6pm
Pipsqueak (173 16th Ave, Seattle)
Masks Required

#Support4AmberKim



Seattle, WA event for Amber Kim at the Pipsqueak Infoshop. SOURCE: @Support4AmberKim

From an article by [Victoria Law in TruthOut](#):

After 17 days, Amber Kim has suspended her one-woman hunger strike protesting her involuntary transfer to a men's prison.

Since her incarceration in 2006, Kim had spent 15 years in men's jails and prisons. During that time, she [fought both for gender-](#)

Political Prisoner News

Long-term indigenous political prisoner Leonard Peltier has been denied parole, having been incarcerated since 1976.

Environmental prisoner Jessica Reznicek has shared a message of thanks for everyone who's been supporting her.



Jesse "Tall Can" Cannon

The Anarchist Black Cross Federation have created and shared a range of updated political prisoner support flyers, and published a new support page for Jesse "Tall Can" Cannon.

Upcoming events connected to Eric King and Josh Davidson's book *Rattling the Cages* are:

- **Friday, Sept. 6, in-person, Oakland, CA:** Eric and Josh will be speaking with former political prisoners **Donna Willmott** and **Claude Marks** at **Tamarack**.
- **Saturday, Sept. 7, in-person, Sacramento, CA:** Eric and Josh will be speaking at the **Sacramento Anarchist Bookfair** at the **Washington Neighborhood Center**.

You can also watch all their videos here. *Rattling the Cages* was also featured in **PEN America's round-up of recent books on justice and incarceration**.

Samidoun has put out a new call for people to take action in solidarity with the Holy Land 5, twenty years after the FBI raids that began their case.

Uprising Defendants, Stop Cop City and Other Ongoing Cases

Casey Goonan, a California defendant currently facing a number of serious charges, recently held a hunger strike over their conditions of incarceration. Check out an update on Casey from his support crew, here.

Anarchist prisoner Hybachi LeMar of the Black Autonomy Federation Chicago Local Organizing Committee has released a statement in support of Casey Goonan. From a post on Indybay.org:

My name is Hybachi LeMar and I'm a member of the Black Autonomy Federation Chicago Local Organizing Committee. I'm sending this message to support the release of scholar activist dedicated community organizer and friend Casey Goonan.

When I was houseless, he let me eat and sleep in his home. Each morning we asked each other, "What's your positive affirmation for the day?" We take a meaningful moment before sharing a positive truth, both of us knowing it's significance in our lives when we internalize it as an instrument of our liberation. More often than not, for the years I've known Casey, he's neglecting his own needs to prioritize those of others, has led me to ask him instinctively, if he's taken his meds yet. And I've lost count of how many times he thanked me for reminding him before asking if I remembered to take mine too.

With barely anything in his pocket, I watched him fill a perfect stranger's diabetic medication prescription. He's loved, and I don't mean by me, but by street walkers and other commoners throughout Chicago.

Casey Goonan is a walking model of our aspired-after ideals. A genuine listener, whose aura is evident in the integrity of compassion. His ideals against genocide are shared by me and each of us around the globe who

envision a world released from its grip.

Free Casey Goonan! Free Jack Mazurek! Free the Cop City 61! Drop the charges against the Merrimack 4 and the Mountain Valley pipeline defenders! Free the Holy Land Foundation 5! Free Leonard Peltier! Free Mumia Abu-Jamal! Free Cletus C Rivera! Free them all!

To support Hybachi LeMar, go here. You can also write to Casey here:

Casey Goonan #UMF227
Santa Rita Jail
5325 Broder Blvd
Dublin, CA 94568

To write to Hybachi:

Hybachi LeMar
c/o Midwest Books to Prisoners
1321 N Milwaukee Avenue PMB 460
Chicago, IL 60622

Arkansas George Floyd uprising defendant Cody Nowlin is now free, and the Uprising Support crew have updated their website with a new section on requests for post-release support.

A rave is being held in Philadelphia on August 2nd to raise funds for Ellie and John, two Georgia uprising defendants who are being released soon. You can donate directly to their post-release funds here.



Philadelphia uprising defendant Khalif Miller has been given a 1-10 year state sentence on top of his existing 5 year federal sentence. You can write to him at:

blatantly parasitic, with the Southport-based nazi David Adams (who is currently active in both PA and BM) entering the local chat to promote PA before promptly leaving.

The riot in Southport saw a police van set on fire outside of a mosque in an attempt to burn it down, and subsequent protests in Hartlepool, Hull, Liverpool and unfortunately Manchester have seen direct attacks on Mosques and Muslims despite the confirmation coming that the attacker was a Christian born in Cardiff to Rwandan parents: everywhere however has seen a dramatic upsurge in racist and fascist violence both around and outside of the demonstrations.

In light of this blatant lie, the far-Right have doubled down on their racism, arguing that it's no longer even about Southport but a generalized cry to protect the figural women and children from an imagined 'invasion' of 'fighting age males.' Notably, these demonstrations have been predominantly male, and have seen an alarming amount of youth get sucked into violence through influence from fascist adults that will inevitably lead to criminalization and further radicalization towards the Right.

We therefore understand this movement as having moved past it's opportunistic parasitic phase, where a tragedy was shamelessly used to propel the fascist movement: it has now entered a period where the fascists no longer 'need' Southport, but will reference back to it as part of a wider political 'justification' that also includes events, figures and positions like the Romani resistance in Harehills, Tommy Robinson's 'persecution' and deliberately manipulated figures about migrant crime rates.

The media and government's coverage of these far-Right thugs as 'protesters' is a calculated decision to legitimize their 'concerns' obscuring the fascistic nature of their views which risks emboldening and normalizing their tactics.

With regards to Manchester on Saturday, we saw the extent of the state's response to the upsurge in far-Right militancy: Keir Starmer's new police powers that followed Southport were fully applied to antifascists and ultimately led the GMP to facilitate the violence of the far-Right demonstration.

From the beginning, multiple crowd control pens were set up that neither demonstration entered, and this meant that antifascists spent the entire day kettled by the GMP with helmets, batons and padded gloves ready, alongside intelligence gathering officers and mounted police behind them for any breaks. The GMP were far more concerned with protecting the fascists 'right' to march and harass marginalized communities in the centre of Manchester.

In the second half of the day, Hijabs were forcibly removed and Muslim women spat on, whilst crowds chanted "Allah is a pedo:" this was entirely preventable. Our decisions were far from strategically perfect, and we have much reflecting to do, but it must be stated that a policing operation of this size and force was unprecedented in recent years. The far-Right, led by the vaguely unknown Richard Bebbington of Ramsbottom, Bury, were wholly unorganised and it was only through the actions of the police that they managed to gain some sort of unity.

In other attempts to spread their hatred, we responded to information they were planning to 'protest' at two migrant hotels in Salford on Friday 3rd, this consisted of 4-6 of them, observing the hotel and police presence from across the road for a few hours before calling it a day. More recently, last night after intelligence that a more confrontational visit was planned to another migrant hotel in greater Manchester, community mobilization saw 120+ antifascists and community members coming in solidarity within an hour of the callout whilst around 15 young lads

hung about in the field next door trying to provoke a reaction and ultimately calling it off as another failure. These events show the fragility and unevenness of the far-Right's current strategy and the importance of community networks and mobilizations in defending against their hatred.

We call on antifascists everywhere to get organized and prepare to physically defend our communities. We especially call for local mobilizations, neighborhood antifascist crews and stronger community links to push the fascists out when they arrive on our doorsteps. The State and the pigs can never keep us safe: if anything, they pose an equal but different threat, and only we can protect us.

¡NO PASARÁN! - Manchester Antifascist Collective

Report from Bristol Antifascists from August 3rd:

Yesterday (Saturday 3rd August 2024), Bristol Antifascists joined with antiracist and antifascist groups from Bristol and the South West, along with hundreds of Bristolians, to oppose a far-Right "Stop the Boats" protest.

We want people to understand up front: hundreds of normal Bristolians held the line yesterday against a brutal, sustained assault by fascists trying to attack a hotel housing migrant and asylum seeker families with very young children. The police absolutely failed in their duty to protect these families.

Disorganised, incompetent and hopelessly outnumbered by fascists, Avon and Somerset Police and the other forces brought in from outside the area would have, if left to their own devices yesterday, allowed a pogrom to happen.

At this stage everyone is familiar with the murders of Bebe, Elsie and Alice in Southport on Monday (29th August 2024). Our hearts are broken for these little girls and their families and loved ones. We cannot imagine the pain they are suffering at this

time. We wish a speedy recovery to the other children and adults injured and traumatized by this attack.

Far-Right and fascist groups are using this tragedy, and the categorically false story that the attacker was a migrant or asylum seeker and a Muslim as an excuse to carry out violent pogroms against those members of our communities around the country.

Bristol Antifascists and our comrades joined a static, peaceful, counter-protest of around 700 people at 6pm at Castle Park. Throughout this hour small groups of fascists and far-Right attempted to provoke or even attack people around the edges of the protest. By around 7pm a larger group of around 100-200 fascists had gathered nearby in Castle Park. The fascists had clearly been drinking all day, and full of Dutch courage were keen on violence, attempting to March directly into the static-counter protest next to St Nicholas' Church.

What ensued was a series of attacks against the static protest by fascists as they repeatedly broke through the hopelessly thin police lines. We faced full cans of beer and cider, glass bottles, and large stones being thrown and a series of direct physical assaults by groups of pissed-up and coked-up wannabe hard men, who were repeatedly sent packing by far better organized counter-protestors and antifascists. Even with horses and attack dogs, the police were far too outnumbered and far too disorganized to effectively control the fascists, and collective self defense was the only thing keeping everybody safe.

Eventually the fascists had retreated to Bristol Bridge. Knowing that they were believed to be intending to head to Redcliffe Hill, where the Mercure Hotel housing migrant families is located, a quick decision was made by a total of around 200-250 counter-protestors to head around via Queen Square to the Hotel to

protect it.

When we arrived the police were all but completely absent, with a handful of cops on bicycles who had followed us being the only visible presence. Conscious of our potentially scary appearance to residents at the hotel, we made certain to demonstrate our solidarity and love for them, with waves, thumbs up, and heart signs exchanged between antifascists and residents of the hotel. It was really notable just how many of the residents are very young, primary school aged children. The downstairs lobby windows are covered with kids' drawings and paintings.

A group of counter-protestors formed a line and linked arms across the hotel entrance while still more of us formed into a tight bloc on the grassy area in front of the hotel. After about 30 minutes a group of around 80-100 fascists, who had broken away from the police on Bristol Bridge, marched up Redcliffe Hill and immediately began to attack us outside the hotel. Again, the police were wildly outnumbered and unable to effectively defend themselves, let alone anyone else.

For a sustained period of around 15-20 minutes, antifascists stood firm, defending ourselves and each other from a constant, intense assault of fists, kicks, bottles and stones thrown at us by fascists intent on attacking the hotel and its residents. The handful of police present flailed, hitting people seemingly at random with batons, and occasionally PAVA-spraying groups of people.

When police enforcements finally arrive in the form of attack dogs, horses and extra officers, the fascists lost their bottle and retreated to the other side of Redcliffe Hill. They remained there in rapidly dwindling numbers, occasionally hurling the odd insult or glass bottle at the counter-protestors, but ultimately unable to muster another attempt at attacking the hotel.

The majority of the 200-250 counter protestors stayed outside the hotel to protect it until around 9pm when Green Party Bristol City Councillors who had began encouraging people to leave telling them that the police would now have the situation under control. Bristol Antifascists want to make it clear: this was wrong of them. The police had demonstrated a total lack of ability to defend the people housed in the Mercure Hotel or to contain the fascist threat in our city. There was still the potential for fascists to regroup and try again to attack the hotel. Around 50-60 people chose to stay at the hotel as it got dark. We'd received a request from parents inside the hotel to keep things quiet as they were putting young children to bed, and we happily obliged.

At around 10pm, as larger numbers of police arrived at the hotel, those of us remaining decided the time was right to quietly leave as a group and then disperse in a safe area in town. However, this wasn't before the police decided to reassert their authority after a frankly humiliating day for them. While people were largely sat quietly on the grass or stood around chatting in front of the hotel entrance, a group of cops in riot get suddenly pushed their way to the front of the hotel, hitting, shoving and shouting at counter-protestors for no apparent reason. Fine. Let them believe they're in charge. Whatever keeps them quiet.

Despite clear confusion and a lack of communication between different groups of police trying to send us in opposite directions, we eventually left the Redcliffe Hill area, and quietly disbanded, blending back into the now quiet night of the city we live in and love so much.

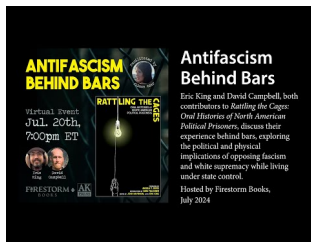
We want to drive that point home: the media and politicians and police will talk about "protestors" and "the public" as though they're two mutually exclusive groups of people. We are the public. This city is our home, and the people who live in

being organized in Seattle at the University of Washington campus and letter-writing events happening in Olympia, WA and [Sacramento, CA](#).



Stack of letters from Sacramento, CA event. SOURCE: @Off_the_99

A [liverstreamed event featuring former antifascist political prisoners Eric King and David Campbell](#) was also organized by Firestorm Books in Asheville, NC and moderated by grassroots journalist, [Alissa Azar](#). Also in Bremerton, WA, a anarcho-punk benefit show raised money and support letters for antifascist prisoners.



[The Final Straw Radio](#) also interviewed the [Antifa International collective](#) to mark the day and you can [view the presentation with David Campbell and Eric King at Firestorm Books here](#).

Black August, Week of Solidarity, and Running Down the Walls

The next few months see a number of important dates in the prisoner support calendar. There's a call to [make August 3rd a day of action for Gaza and Palestinian prisoners](#).



George Jackson

The entire month of August is commemorated as Black August, and [Jailhouse Lawyers Speak have suggested a number of ways that outside supporters can help mark the occasion](#), as well as sharing messages from [Sundiata Jawanza](#) and [James "Doc" Holliday](#).



International Anarchist Black Cross groups hold a week of solidarity with anarchist prisoners from August 23rd-30th, and [you can see this year's call on their website now](#):

Those of us living under the fragility of neoliberal 'peace' are expected to take political positions devoid of human feeling or meaningful action. How to break this artificial veil constructed to make 'war zones' appear a world away, when the weapon shipments, and the webs of diaspora, tell a different story? How to seize back our humanity and our agency, understanding the urgency while giving space to feel, grieve, and act, standing hand in hand against this monstrosity? And how to maintain this fabric of resistance that defies news cycles and nation state politics, recognizing the fights for survival and liberation against ongoing colonization and resource extraction, that are materializing globally outside of news spotlights?

What is to be done? With constant return we fumble with these questions. Empathy and solidarity is the strongest medicine against the current realities we face. Empathy and solidarity is why we are here- our hearts embracing these words. We choose to share the weight of grief and take steps toward action in this fabric of resistance that has been woven through time on this earth. Is it not our yearning towards the forces of care, creation and destruction that we gather around our fires? Is it not because we wish to understand and greet each others pain and seek freedom from oppression that we show solidarity with our comrades who are carrying the heavy weights of repression?

There are too many atrocities, too many beautiful spirits taken from this world to grieve them all. Among the bloodshed live the spirits of those who choose to resist against this hegemonic order, against the grinding wheels of genocide and colonialism. There are those who, throughout the turning of this earth, choose not to ignore the forces that prey upon free life. Many have chosen to greet these forces with fists clenched, a grin from cheek to cheek. I'm sure you share this too, maybe not smiling, but we are here again. With time, with strength and patience we deepen our constellations, we strengthen and weave new webs, alongside the earths cycles we change, grow, and learn.

With strength we make this call to action for a week of solidarity with anarchist prisoners. Let our words not die in our mouths but our ideas and actions be realized.

Organize solidarity events, film screenings, banner drops, discussion rounds, direct actions, radio shows, letter writings ... be creative!

Further ahead, mid-September will see Running/Pushing Down the Walls events in various cities, with [Philadelphia](#), [Bloomington](#), [Lowell](#), [Chicago](#), and [Huntington Park](#) confirmed so far. Jailhouse Lawyers Speak are also calling for ["Shut Em' Down" demonstrations](#) on

“autonomous,” who are heirs to the Zapatista struggle but autonomous from it, autonomous in search of their own path; the third group is that of the armed autonomous, who are not official nor Zapatista nor autonomous but just the opposite (I don’t know if I’m paraphrasing Cantinflas or López Portillo).

They go their own way, convinced of the legitimacy of armed struggle in the face previous violence.

This split has not been recognized or acknowledged by the Zapatista autonomous nor by the autonomous-autonomous.

To the officialists, the three autonomous groups are the same. They demand their annihilation equally. Their ancestors murdered ancestors of the three groups without distinction.

(The problem in Tila is much, much more complex than what is presented above. I have chosen to speak only of what is related to one’s own norm, in one’s own or appropriated name, to be able to exemplify the passage from autonomy for the common good to the autonomy of exclusion.)

The force of disagreement

In Tila as in Oxchuc as in the entire state of Chiapas, sustaining autonomy is a complex task, with members of the same “people” engaged in a struggle for territory, resources, political parties, religions, political-campesino organizations, and of course, public funds.

But there is a new protagonist who has joined a dispute that seemed to be between forms of government recognized (or not) by one or the other.

These characters are the organized crime groups, who have grown like *cordyceps* in that gloomy mire of ungovernability and mutual distrust.

The mycelium of these *cordyceps* silently and surreptitiously infest everything, appearing in political parties, in religions, in organizations, in families...

It makes no difference to them whether their recruits live in autonomous territories, legal estates, municipal palaces, or caracoles.

Those who engage in illegal activity flourish where legality is questioned by superimposed norms that cancel each other out.

More than firepower, their power comes from disagreement, from the inability of autonomous or officials to impose their own law upon the other.

To re-imagine

In these times, with these new characters and these new conditions, it is necessary to stop and contrast imagined autonomy with these images of currently existing autonomy, the autonomy of those who practice and live it.

In front there is a bigger enemy than a free municipality and autonomous communities, which not even little by little has been undermining and destroying them, because it grows inside them without any of them having the capacity to defend themselves from themselves.

It is imperative to re-imagine, to consider the possibility that, in order to build your own norms, the size of the agreement is more important than the size of the weapons.

To imagine that the next photographs of autonomy will reflect more sharing than competition.

It’s true that it seems the omertà has crushed our hands and our word, that one can barely place little lights on ephemeral settings, but it is urgent - without denying the pain of the wounds nor forgetting the legacy of so many struggles - to respond together about who we are and what we need.

Imagining that answer, I believe, is the first step to continue forward.

Colophon

The communists say that their way is the only possible emancipatory

way. Underlying that assertion is the temptation to make all other ways disappear (which would effectively make theirs the only possible way).

The liberals claim that their way is not perfect, but that all the others are worse (and therefore should not exist).

The religious fundamentalists say that their doctrine is the only one that guarantees eternal salvation. And they have shown throughout history sufficient evidence that they will not hesitate to utterly destroy other saving doctrines.

I still think that I want a world where many worlds fit.

In Contempt #43: Deadly Heat Wave Hits Prisons, Multiple Hunger Strikes Kick Off, July 25th Roundup

August 1, 2024

In this column, we present our monthly roundup of political prisoner, prison rebel, and repression news, happenings, announcements, action and analysis. Packed in as always are updates, fundraisers, and birthdays.

There’s a lot happening, so let’s dive right in!

July 25th



Benefit show for antifascist prisoners in Bremerton, WA.

July 25th was the annual day of solidarity with antifascist prisoners, and solidarity events and benefit shows took place across the US, with a panel on political prisoners

it, of every race, ethnicity and religion are our neighbors and friends. So too are the residents of the Mercure Hotel. Bristol welcomes migrants and refugees, and we will fight for them if we have to.

Yesterday showed the power and importance of community self-defense. Normal Bristolians put themselves in harms way to protect their neighbors in the Mercure hotel, and we stopped a violent, racist mob from doing harm to the families inside. The police were beyond useless, and it was the bravery, moral conviction, and community solidarity of the antifascist counter-protestors that kept the fascists at bay.

Again, we are the public. Outside of this we’re normal boring people, with normal boring lives, and normal boring jobs. Antifascism is and must be a community effort, and as this flare-up of far-Right violence continues, we are going to need everyone to step up and do their part to keep our communities safe around the country.

Every day is the Battle of Cable Street. Keep fighting it. Always Antifascist. No Pasaran. Love and Solidarity Forever. Bristol Antifascists.

Report on mobilization on August 3rd in Bristol from [anarchist newspaper Freedom](#):

Castle Park in central Bristol was already bustling when we arrived early, about 700 of us according to Bristol Antifascists. The word was that fascists had already tried to start fights with locals. About an hour into our counter-protest, we caught wind of their arrival and moved in large groups to the entrances by Bristol Bridge and Temple Meads station at the edges of the Park. They were spotted arriving from the east so we marched up to face them, about 50 yards behind a thin line of police horses and officers with batons.

The fascists hadn’t anticipated how many of us would show up, but they arrived drunk, angry and

looking to fight. Proving to them that they were outnumbered, we chanted “We are many, you are few. We are Bristol, who are you!”.

They were eventually charged by police horses, but roughly 100-200 fascists moved to convene on the hill. We held our ground facing a shower of glass bottles, cans of beer and rocks. A couple of times I watched anti-fascists blocking cans from hitting police officers standing between us.

We fired into action, coming to the aid of a black man who was attacked, and running down to Bristol Bridge to make sure they couldn’t spread any further. I watched police on horses shocked and confused at the spread of the crowd, completely inept at dealing with the fascists. I watched my friend face down a police officer with an attack dog, strategically lost in the spread of people around him. We pushed the fascists down High Street, St Nicholas Street and Bristol Bridge until they were bottlenecked and out of steam. After a while, we realised that the police had held them in the exact direction they wanted to go—towards the Mercure Hotel currently housing refugees.

With the police in the way, we, now less than half our original number, sprinted through the streets of Bristol, chanting “Bristol is antifascist” while onlookers ate restaurant food, round through Queens Square and over the bridge to Redcliffe. Comrades handed out bottles of water and energy bars to each other on the way, checking in on each other, keeping close as we weaved through traffic.

I’ll never forget what I saw when we arrived—after hearing reports police were planning to protect the hotel with vans and riot officers—a small line of antifascists linked arm in arm at the door had made it there first. Cops on bicycles were trying to catch up with us, but no other police were in sight. For about 30 minutes we cheered, with the refugees thanking us through the windows of their rooms. They

were overjoyed—children and parents were waving and smiling and making hearts out of their hands to us. I cried. “Refugees are welcome here”, we chanted. We weren’t sure if the fash would show up, but sure enough, they trudged their way up the hill towards us.

We formed lines to ready ourselves, standing shoulder to shoulder as tight as possible to ensure they wouldn’t make it through. A comrade behind me got hit in the head with a can. Another next to me got punched in the face. One fascist, who had blood gushing down his already-red face, led the pack from the road to try and get to the hotel door, but never made it through. We defended ourselves and each other and the hotel, and we would’ve continued if we needed to. The moments flash by in my memory—it certainly didn’t feel like 15-20 minutes, it felt like it was over in minutes before police horses arrived again.

That intense attack was the last time we came into contact with one of the groups of fascists, but we still had the police to deal with. After hours of letting the fascists linger on the side of the road, with us stood firm on the other side, the police eventually formed a semi-circle around us. Local Green Party councillors worked with the police to tell us it was safe to leave, that the police had it covered and had pushed the fash back to Temple Meads. But after the ineptitude of the police response until then, about 50 of us stayed steadfast. We complied (too much) with the police, letting them through to the hotel to use the toilets (even though we weren’t allowed in ourselves). As they built their numbers around us we remained linked arm in arm by the hotel doors through to sunset.

The night ended violently. Another group of fascists—the police—decided bully tactics were the way to disperse us. They randomly targeted one comrade in a mask, enforcing section 60, singling them out and grabbing them by the arm to pull them from the group. We pulled the

comrade back into the group, but by that point, the cops decided to swarm us. Countless officers split the group in two, pushing most of us closer to the fascists despite telling us our 'safe' exit was in the opposite direction. Most officers fell into line, oblivious about what had happened, confused and unsure what to do next. After another 15-minute stand-off with the police, we fanned out knowing we had done our job successfully.

We the people defended our city on Saturday. Not the cops, not the politicians. What was likely an organised pogrom attempt by fascists was fended off by the Bristol community linked arm in arm. The shoddy police response is another example that they are never the safety or protection they claim to be. On Saturday, we showed the power of our community.

We stand ready and prepared to do it again. We will show fascists they will always be outnumbered, they will never be welcome here, and they should be scared to show their faces.

~ Cristian Talbot

Report posted to [Organize Magazine](#), a publication of the Anarchist Federation about a mobilization in Hull on August 3rd:

Promo for the counter-demo only began - as far as I'm aware - on Friday. A friend (member of the Hull Communist Group) messaged me that the fascist rally was happening. We had a look at the promo from the fascists: a facebook event called "Enough is Enough", shared to a group called the "Hull Patriotic Protestors", and seemingly mostly led by someone called John Francis. It said their rally began at 12:00, so we decided on 11:30. He kept me updated as he made a quick poster and sent it to the SWP and Co-operation Hull. I shared it with friends, with a Queer group and to a friend who's part of the Hull anti-raids group.

I arrived at Queen Vic Square a

little before 11:30, with three comrades alongside. One of us recognised members of the Stand Up to Racism / SWP group, so we joined up with them. When we go the the square there were already between 50-100 of the fascists rallied, with flags and speakers making speeches on the platform. There were no police. Since there were less than 10 of us at this moment, we didn't want to draw attention to ourselves. More people started joining us: individuals who had come alone, Co-operation Hull's group, a small group my friend spotted with a "Hope not Hate" placard in the crowd. The University's RCP group also arrived. I think we ended up with 60-70 people in total.

While we were gathering, due to their numbers growing into the hundreds and the police being absent, we kept a lower profile, holding up our banners and placards but not beginning chants or songs yet. We took position on the benches at the edge of the square. At 12:00, the police van turned up and they ran out, forming a ring around the fascists. None of them had any riot gear. The SWP began setting up the speakers they'd brought and we began our chants. This grabbed the Far Right's attention. A sea of faces turned towards us as we shouted "Refugees are welcome here."

The first egg hit my friend in the eye. He spoke to a police liaison officer to make sure they were aware. No reaction from them. More and more eggs started being thrown - clearly some of fascists had come prepared to throw food at people. I got showered with a sack of flour at one point. There was a point where they seemed to run out of eggs and that's when random food (oranges, chips) started being tossed at us, along with cans of beer and plastic bottles.

Individuals from the Far Right also kept getting through the police line to get into our group, to shove or threaten us. The police would tow each one away and deposit them back at the rally to the cheers of their mates. At

one point, one of them appeared behind my friend, put his hand in their hair and said "You want to take a walk with me." This man was later seen assaulting an elderly man when the riot started and is a known local thug.

Timings were a complete blur at the time, but around 12:30-12:40, a group of them trickled out from the police line and gathered round to the right hand side of us. I ran over to hold our line. This was how the riot began. In moments, many of them were pouring over to that side, clustering behind us where Paragon Street meets Vic square. Police were rushing to meet them. The rioters aggression began to focus on the cops. There was a moment of chaos and then police were shoving and grabbing my friend and me, shouting "Walk". We did, but our comrades had vanished and the two of us were suddenly in the riot, surrounded by the people we'd been facing off moments before. They were running down Jameson Street, where a new police line seemed to have formed ahead of us. We tried heading down there, but there was clearly no way of crossing the clashing rioters and cops. To either side of us, shopkeepers were locking their doors. I was wearing an ancom flag and held a placard saying "The murderer was not a refugee" as well as both of us having been very visible on the demo, so we didn't completely avoid their attention. I remember a young woman screaming at me that the murder was a migrant. I shouted back that he was Welsh. An older man started asking me if I work. I answered yes, then he shouted something along the lines of "And you want your taxes to pay for the invaders". I answered "Yes" and shouted that they're "selfish c*nts." Another guy said he wasn't selfish, that he was fighting for his grandkids. Who was I helping? I shouted back that I'd help anyone, everyone I could.

My friend said they could smell smoke. I sniffed. It smelt of chemicals, closer to smoke from fireworks than of wood fires. A man, on his way to rushing up to

they decide on norms that regulate their coexistence and their relationship with neighboring communities and with the government. They are many, insignificant perhaps to nearly everyone, except for themselves.

These are the groups of residents who impede the growth of ecocidal urban development, who hang banners with "Thief: If we catch you, we lynch you," those who collect funds to build retaining walls, those who agree on one day a month to clean the green area...

They are also the communities who put stones in the road to block the passage of viruses (as effective as the actions of "legal" mayors who do so with the same intention). Everything is built based on agreement that derives from the norms of collective well-being.

The San Andrés Accords

But without doubt the greatest autonomous experience we've had was the process of dialogs in San Andrés. A never before assembled group of scholars and representatives of the peoples raised two fundamental issues: who we are and what we need.

This process of reaching agreement was negotiated with representatives of the legislative and executive branches, which resulted in the San Andrés Accords and the Law of Indigenous Rights and Culture. Laws of their own with the backing of the State.

A historic moment that would have transformed not just the relationship of the peoples with the State, but also their living conditions and their full and dignified participation in decision making, was betrayed first by the timorous Ernesto Zedillo and then by Vicente Fox.

That great exercise in autonomy that occurred in San Andrés Sacamchen was partially rejected by the executive and legislature, both during the Zedillo and Fox administrations. The following administrations also did little to comply with the agreements.

The peoples of Oaxaca, however,

took advantage of the loopholes in the reform to legislate at the local level and to create municipalities ruled by Indigenous "customs and traditions." Today, more than 400 municipalities choose their authorities according to their own normative systems.

In Chiapas, the Zapatista communities opted for rebel autonomy, without recognition by the State (without a budget or anything else). The local legislature, without consulting the peoples, approved a limited and unimplemented reform. Until Oxchuc tried it.

Restoring dignity

The current construction of autonomy bypasses everything that is theorized about it. To name oneself is no longer "this is who we are," but rather an affirmation of difference without building agreements with those who are different.

In these times, governing oneself results in rejecting by force the previous form of government or that of one's immediate neighbors. The issuing of one's own norms (not always, but sometimes) is often a mechanism of impunity and unaccountability and (again, not always) without prior consultation.

This autonomy based on rifles has as its foundation many years of grievances and exploitation. In all the communities where the people have risen up in arms, they have risen up over the bodies of their loved ones, hidden behind the mantle of impunity and State omission.

If prefixes were movies, the "AUTO" of this armed AUTOnomy would not have happened without the "IN" [or UN] prequels. This *nomos* of the jungle arose as a response to the UNGovernability, the INeptitude, the UNenforcement, the INCapacity, the INjustice... including the off-brand spinoff called INDigenism.

In every one of the photos by Isaac Guzmán that co-create this text we could spend a long time elaborating a semiotics of grievance. The story

each photo tells should not be read without also knowing the previous story, the prequels of these sequels.

Discussing the categorical imperative becomes banal when the norm is dictated by rifles. The "we are good and they are bad" leaves no room for moral metaphysics. Restoring human dignity comes in last in the face of a desire for revenge.

But "autonomy is to govern oneself," we keep repeating to ourselves.

The entry arch to the community of Tila welcomes you. Depending on which side you live (plus or minus 20 meters), you will be governed by different norms. This arch marks the beginning and end of itself, of equals who ceased to be equals.

"Autonomy is to govern oneself," we repeat to ourselves.

Tila and the dissolution of the other

The inhabitants of the community of Tila want to stop being a part of Ejido Tila. The inhabitants of Ejido Tila want the lands of the community of Tila to return to the ejido to which they belong.

Each group governing itself.

What adjective should we add to autonomy when the government that emanates from it includes only a few of us?

Can it be called autonomy if your existence as a group or individual is conditioned on submissive obedience to the norms of another? Is there autonomy without agreement?

When the autonomy of some is the heteronomy of others who share the same territory, the only possibility that seems to remain is the dissolution of the other, the only agreement possible is submission, the loss of moral freedom (as Castoriadis would say).

In that same Tila, in addition to the "official" self-government, three "rebel" autonomies exist: the Zapatista, which by its numbers is almost merely symbolic; that of the

Perhaps we imagine a prosecutor who, instead of solving pressing cases for society, dedicates his time to litigating against his own family and fighting for a prestigious state scholarship. Or perhaps an entire community that, after a thousand fiascos, decides to expel political parties from local government.

My favorite imaginary image of autonomy is that of a man who, from a cubicle in an autonomous university (which would collapse without public funding), writes an article arguing that autonomy for the people is only possible if they refuse to accept public funding.

Autonomy can be many things. Philosophers will tell us that its existence depends on the “categorical imperative,” sociology will unthinkingly turn to “agreement in assembly,” some lawyers will probably lecture us about the indivisibility of territorial sovereignty and the concurrence of the law, while anthropology will offer to walk with us to reflect together on justice and dignity. How, then, does one look at and live autonomy?

Let’s look at the autonomous experience of the peoples of Chiapas.

Customs and traditions?

As an initial compromise, we must accept that there are many ways of practicing it, as by definition it is impossible for there to be ONE autonomy. But we can reach a basic agreement on the definition of autonomy applied to peoples: their capacity to rule themselves based on their own norms and governing bodies in their territories (be they municipalities, states, or communities).

Autonomy is, thus, to govern oneself, to make decisions for oneself instead of simply accepting the decisions of others. So it is between individuals as between communities as between regions and freelancers.

But the construction of peoples’ autonomies has gone through many ups and downs, many forms, and many names. To not dive too deep, we can distinguish between those

normative systems that dialog and negotiate with the State and those that do not (or almost do not).

In the de-indigenized urban world, we label as “customs and traditions” any form of government that we don’t understand and don’t care to understand. Although it is only applied to Indigenous peoples. Many don’t understand European forms of government either, but we don’t call those “customs and traditions.”

The normative systems of the peoples exist in a continual metamorphosis that negotiate with power and governments. In the Viceroyalty they had one way, after Independence another, after the Reform another, in the post-Revolution another, and so on. It is never the same, but it is always their own.

The MAREZ and ephemerality

However, the most recent version of autonomy in the communities of Chiapas is (perhaps) the first to name itself as such, to be called as such by those who practice it. Its concrete manifestation was the Rebel Zapatista Autonomous Municipalities (MAREZ).

Grouped together in the Good Government Councils (JBG), the MAREZ issued their own norms and ratified laws enacted by the Clandestine Revolutionary Indigenous Committee (CCRI, aka the EZLN command).

This generation of norms and agreements (a *sine qua non* condition of autonomy) had a peculiar condition of ephemerality, as in the absence of jurisprudence, every JBG issued new ones and de facto repealed the previous ones. Every year, autonomy was restarted, like an autoimmune condition.

All this autonomy that was built and rebuilt on a permanent basis disappeared with the November 5, 2023, decree that announced the disappearance of the MAREZ and the JGB, along with declaring as invalid all related positions and documents, that is, all the established norms.

(This same decree announces the

creation of new forms of government, the Autonomous Regional Governments, of which is there little territorial or regulatory information.)

Oxchuc and political parties

Parallel to Zapatista autonomy there exist other forms of peoples’ autonomy. Traditional governments remain (more or less in synchrony with municipal governments). But without a budget and without participating in decision making, they are largely symbolic.

New forms of self-government have also emerged, such as the case of Oxchuc, where after numerous proceedings and “verifications,” in 2018, they were able to select their authorities in accordance with their own normative system as recognized by the Chiapas Institute of Elections and Citizen Participation (IEPC).

But upon being excluded from the process, political parties united to derail the process, alongside (but not mixed with) Zapatista sympathizers who viewed this “legal” autonomy as a threat to their own autonomous processes.

Autonomy in Oxchuc ended up destroying itself by gunfire in 2021.

New forms of government

Other experiences of self-government have occurred in Altamirano and in Pantheló, after electoral processes were rigged and manipulated to keep in local power groups whose main interest was plundering and whose only method of convincing was threats and murder.

In both cases (and in Oxchuc after 2021) the one-person mayorships have de facto disappeared to make way for Municipal Councils (that are not necessarily de jure).

With stumbles and ups and downs, new forms of government are being built.

These are the other autonomies that don’t appear on the TV, nor do they have guns, nor are they grouped around acronyms, but

the police line, saw us and ran up. He said he’d seen one of our guys hit and his glasses had been knocked off. “I have them. Can you get them to him?” I said yes and he pressed the glasses into my hand. I thanked him and he ran down the street to riot.

A woman ran up to us. I thought I recognized her from last year, participating in a demo led by Alec Yerbury, a split from Patriotic Alternative. She said we had to get out of here, that we weren’t safe, why were we among them. She said to come with her to the police. We ran back down Jameson Street, to the edge of the square where we’d been stood. “Protect them” she shouted at the cops. The cop responded with an abrupt “No” and that they couldn’t “waste resources.”

We ended up circling back around along roads that seemed to have quietened, to further up Jameson Street, where our comrades were waiting for us. Everyone was safe. The police had shoved them, shouted at them to run, saying “They will kill you!” so all of the counter-protestors except the two of us had run up Jameson Street ahead of the rioters.

We briefly went down Jameson Street to see the riot going on. It wasn’t an structured line between police and rioters, but instead just a cluster of noise and action. There were a couple of funny conversations we had with the Right, where they started trying to debate us - “define what racism is” - then having a go that we couldn’t have a “reasonable discussion,” all in the middle of a riot with us splattered with eggs and flour that their compatriots had thrown at us.

Here our action ends. We retreated, established where everyone was and left in groups. An International Carnival was scheduled for today; it was meant to parade through the city centre but the police had rerouted it yesterday and then ordered for the parade to be cancelled completely today. We joined its starting point out of the city centre, where it was being held as

a stationary event instead.

News and social media showed that the rioting continued all day and into the night. In the city centre, fires were being set, shops smashed and looted. There it looked possible that it had morphed into more generic looting and rioting, whereas there were a set of fascists who targeted a hotel housing refugees, then moved up Ferensway and then headed down Spring Bank, where many Muslims and people of colour live, including a mosque.

When we had walked past the mosque on our way out of the city centre, there were many local men standing ready to defend it, with three cops to the side. When two of us were circling back into the city centre to retrieve my friend’s bike, we glimpsed a crowd of around 30 rioters making their way up Ferensway, led by a man wearing a England flag shirt and a traffic cone on each arm.

Reflection:

The police response was surprising. I’m sure for Leftists in other cities, the aggression of the police towards us would be expected, but at previous Hull anti-fascist protests they’ve been far more reasonable and seemingly sympathetic towards us. Strange decisions were made - turning up long after the fascists had begun their rally, no preparation for a riot despite news from elsewhere in the country - and then I think their loss of control caused them to become more aggressive and emotional than I’ve seen previously. A riot is unprecedented in Hull and this must have affected the police response. Also, there was no one on our side who had established rapport (or were able to) with the police. In previous actions I’ve attended, the Trades Union Council have taken a lead in organising and - not being far left - they were able to communicate with the police more easily than us.

It was disappointing how outnumbered we were. I’m

impressed at how many anti-fascists attended on less than 24 hours notice, but there were between 300-500 at the far right rally. This is many more than any far right demo I’ve seen in Hull. However, I think the organisers wanted to achieve an obviously Right-wing, but dignified protest. John Francis was pictured wearing a “Stop the Boats” shirt. The Queen Vic statue and platform were covered in British and England flags. I think they wanted a show of strength and controlled aggression, to embolden everyone else in the city who could agree with them. It’s true that violent right-wingers will be emboldened. I fear were going to see an increase in hate crimes. At a bar where one of my friends works, the next day someone called asking if the staff were of English ancestry.

But they ended up on drunken, deranged riots, causing a lot of damage to the city that won’t disappear quickly. I think most of the general population are afraid and horrified. I expect there are people who are socially right-wing and could be sympathetic to the “Stop the Boats,” “Muslim grooming gangs” talking points, but who would be horrified that local Muslim areas have actually been terrorised. Many people are going to be afraid. In the coming days and weeks, I’m planning to participate in clean-ups. (Re)building solidarity and community could be more important that the action of a counter-demo.

Editors Note. As mentioned in the piece, Hull would later see sprawling violence with “foreigners” being mobbed in their car and the Kurdish owners car lot next door being entirely trashed. As was a wide variety of small independent stores and chains such as Lush, Shoezone, O2 and Greggs.

Report posted to [Organize Magazine](#), a publication of the Anarchist Federation about a mobilization in Preston on August 3rd:

Friday night, a message pops up in my (S’s) local queer Discord

server: a far right protest has been planned at the Preston Flag Market for tomorrow, and the council have put out a notice asking people to stay away and stay safe. Shortly after that, the Preston branch of Stop The War shared a poster for a counter-protest Unity Rally. Initially I had assumed this was organised by Stop The War Preston & South Ribble, but this was not stated on the poster, and they made it clear that they were just sharing this call to action. I decided I would go to the counter-protest and take my camera, to document what was happening in and to our communities. While I was scoping out the area and taking some test shots, I ran into a friend, another anarchist-feminist trans woman, and we spent the day together hanging out, helping someone in need, and shooting photos. These are some of the things we saw.

The far-right protest consisted mainly of a small group of younger people who occupied the Obelisk on the Market Square.

The counter-protest was about five times larger, and included members of the local branches of the Socialist Workers Party and Stand Up to Racism East Lancashire.

At one point, one of the protesters, donning a Union Jack flag as a cape, wandered through the space that had formed in the middle of the square, and started to taunt the counter-protesters. Police presence was moderate at this stage, and things were mostly calm. It felt more like a bunch of people standing around than a rally or demo. Which is fine, since we want peace in our communities. I didn't manage to hear what words were said, but eventually they stalked back over to their group.

Later on, the protesters kicked off. A few eggs were thrown, and a glass bottle, and at one point they ran off the Obelisk and down the side of Turtle Bay. Some banged on the windows in an attempt to smash them. At this point, the police took a more

active role, and here we see a gaggle of officers bundling a protester into a van.

Everyone poured up the street from the square and onto an intersection on the main road. The movement was brisk but calm, right-wing agitators and left-wing locals woven together in the crowd.

Once the different groups had moved to the main road, they seemed to fragment again into little clusters dotted on all corners of the street, like party-goers sticking with their friends in a nightclub. The police tried to pull apart some of the different contingencies and keep people out of the road. Life went on calmly.

One of the protesters got a bit aggro with H: She baselessly accuses me of starting on her, attacking her. That tends to represent how a lot of trans femmes get attacked.

and splashed her with energy drink. The police moved in to pull our groups apart and try and restore some calm, even though my friend had been assaulted. To any established order, a nullifying peace is more desirable than a fight for radical justice.

A couple of officers chatting to a group on the other side of the street. For many people, it's not clear from their appearance what they believe or what they want. Throughout the day, some people engaged in constructive dialogue, or at least attempted to. It makes me wonder how we can reconfigure protest / counter-protest events to facilitate discussion and prefiguration.

Later on, the most vocal of the protesters started to chant and rally their troops again, but their contingent was small. At this point the counter-protest had essentially dissipated, as the job of demonstrating the insignificance of the right-wing, both to them and their supporters, and to our community and ourselves, was mostly complete. Here we see some police officers recording video evidence of the protesters.

They decided to move on to the park, and H and I decided to follow them down and keep an eye on them. The police remained on the main road. Their demo was a fizzle, and I felt like we had leisurely chased them off.

Our Monster-wielding antagonist then appeared from across the street and attacked H:

She sprayed the entire contents of her can in my face, repeating her accusations from earlier. (Every accusation is a confession, after all). When I refused to cede any physical or verbal ground to her, she then began swinging without a second thought, initiating a physical confrontation.

I decided to stay back and document this, and record evidence - which worked, as the attacker's friends eventually convinced her, after several bouts in a car park, that she was incriminating herself.

The group moved off and dispersed before the police arrived; we heard talk of them reconvening in Avenham Park, but, thankfully, didn't see any evidence of this happening. We met up with someone else from the counter-protest and wandered down to the park together. We saw some of our agitators slide past us later on, shielding their faces from our biological and mechanical eyes. And then we just camped out on the grass, at the edge of a free party that was going on, completely unrelated to everything else that had happened earlier in the day. Not bad for a summer afternoon in these meteorologically and politically uncertain times ☺

August 5th

Sheffield Antifascist Network report from August 5th:

A statement can't do justice to the horrific scenes in South Yorkshire yesterday.

We want to thank everyone who turned up in Sheffield and saw

opening into an office space, hopefully setting off sprinklers and causing water damage.

Police sirens could be seen and heard from multiple directions, but before SPVM commanders understood what was happening, the crowd dispersed and disappeared into the night. There were no arrests, and no one was injured.

While corporate media ignored the demo, video showing the march and direct actions circulated widely on social media, including on an arabic-language account with hundreds of thousands of followers.

The local struggle in solidarity with Palestine has seen a fair variety of tactics tested in short order over the past nine months. Night demos organized without inviting the police are a new one in this context. We may want to consider doing more of them.

A week earlier on July 12th, the SPVM sent riot cops to flank both sides of a small night demo announced on social media following the dismantling of the McGill camp. The cops entered the street alongside the march and preemptively attacked a side banner, ripping the banner out of people's hands, swinging batons and deploying enormous quantities of pepper spray. The crowd's tenacity was impressive, but it was not possible to overcome this degree of police violence and begin transforming the march into something greater. One role that a night demo without police can play is to respond to events like these, tending to our militant spirits and repairing our confidence, while showing that the SPVM is putting its units in danger for nothing by intimidating and brutally repressing demos, because our targets will get smashed regardless.

We also want to reflect on how different forms of demonstrations make it more or less possible to reach beyond our existing networks. What is striking in the interactions with enthused

passersby on July 19th is how the normal police presence at a combative demo would have rendered these interactions impossible. Police doing traffic control typically redirect all vehicles away from a march, and the scale and aggression of police units on all sides of a demo is extremely intimidating, limiting the possibilities for action in the minds of onlookers - and objectively. No unprepared civilian in their right mind would try to join us. Without the separation imposed by the police, we can imagine doing more in the future to enable willing passersby to take the street with us. This could look like bringing a supply of masks to distribute to people, explicitly inviting them to join, and quickly sharing any important safety information in a friendly way with joiners.

A number of windows on the demo route unfortunately withstood the blows of hammers and rocks. This raises a question of tools. Chunks of porcelain as projectiles are more effective at breaking windows than either hammers or rocks. They're also harder to source (ask a comrade), and more care must be taken when throwing to avoid injuring anyone. In the future, perhaps "hammer teams" could make the first attempt, and if a target proves too challenging, hand it off to a "porcelain team."

The enthusiasm for this new tactic shows that the community is looking for a new format for demos. Beyond shattered windows, exploring what autonomous groups can do within demos without police suggests new horizons. We can test new tactics and mixes of old ones, or even police response times around different strategic areas in the city. We can also improve our speed and comfort level employing different tactics so we are not attempting things for the first time with cops breathing down our neck.

With the challenges of the past few months in demos announced on social media, even in contingents, perhaps this new format can also be seen as a mobilizing strategy. If we play our cards right, we can use it to

speak to the public, spreading anarchist ideas and practices, so when we show up as a contingent in a public demo our orientation is known to those around us and they might be more encouraged to join us in actions. Hopefully, it will allow us to strike a balance, to be ready to raise the stakes and be strategic in enacting a successful plan, as well as being ready to respond combatively to police violence in bigger public demos alongside hundreds or thousands of others.

Friday raised morale, built confidence and strengthened bonds of complicity. We need to find opportunities to achieve wins even when they are small and celebrate them. The same tactic can be utilized at strategic moments like a major event in the city, or to achieve strategic goals on short notice, or in response to significant police repression.

How Many Autonomies Fit in a Community?

August 2, 2024

The following text by Leonardo Toledo, translated by Scott Campbell, takes a critical look at various autonomous processes in so-called Chiapas, Mexico. The original Spanish-language article is accompanied by a photo essay by Isaac Guzmán.

What do we imagine when we say "autonomy"? There are many disparate possible scenes. From an official invoicing a table dance in the name of his autonomous organization to a community self-defense member ambushed by police, soldiers, narcos, and former self-defense members.

Another image of autonomy could be the man with three positions in autonomous institutions who telephones his best friend to make fun of the way a group of Indigenous people speak, but it can also be an Indigenous community meeting in assembly, deciding upon their next local government together.

ability to know so much about what we're doing that it limits possibilities. But the spirit of the people is greater than man's technology. This system is constantly trying to control the possibilities of insurrection and rebellion. We've still got to make this happen, but with a sense of urgency because they are determined to keep this empire going for as long as they can.

H.R.: I think it's important to do that spiritual work and recognize that we're all connected, intertwined. It can be really easy to project onto other people tendencies you might not like about yourself. That's why doing that shadow work is so important. Also, globally, xenophobia is a way we separate ourselves from others and say, "Oh, but I'm not like that. My ways are better." Getting past that illusion of superiority is important. None of us have the answer. There's hope and uncertainty and we need to go where we've never been. It's scary, but on the flip side there's a sense of awe and mystery.

I think it's also important to focus on infrastructure, both socially and physically. Socially, I mean, in terms of all the systems of domination that keep us in place and force us into submission with the prison industrial complex and State apparatus. I think the prison industrial complex is an expression of social infrastructure. Then there's also the physical infrastructure and how it's being destroyed by the neoliberal scheme to divest from it. Everything is literally falling apart. But there's also a shift that's taking place that's allowing us to hone in on what really matters—how we can create systems that bring us closer together to collectively build cohesion and new infrastructure that is in line with serving life as a whole. I see people playing more with ideas around ecology. That's what de-growth is; it's about actually shifting the economy to value life and recognition that we don't need to continue growing, but need to grow inward, downward, back to the earth, into society and community. That makes me feel hopeful.

We should be focusing on the
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Earth and climate catastrophe, while creating more points of connection because things are going to continue to unravel. The Earth is going to continue to try to shock us into making some real global changes. And that doesn't all have to be bad. If we have systems in place that enable us to take care of each other—like mutual aid—that will allow us to pull together resources locally as things start to unravel and have better plans in place. So, connect with the people who are thinking about those things, arming and strengthening themselves with the knowledge that allows us to build out of the chaos. Do that shadow work, connect with your own source energy, and trust that it's connected to the goodness of love and life that you were born into. Move from that place. And don't lose heart!

A.A.: We used to talk about temporary autonomous zones. That can be any time you take a moment with other people to talk with each other and interact in ways that helps you to reconnect. Just as human beings and with the earth. You've got to realize that you're not just an independent activist. In this thing here, you are connected to all that that is; from history to the future or as the Indigenous folks say, "the next seven generations." When we talk about changing the world it's not just the oppressive structures in the name of some revolutionary rhetoric. The change is within. We are a part of shaping culture. And culture, as a practice, is changeable. It's always changing and that's a beautiful thing.

Sarah Farahat is a transdisciplinary Egyptian American cultural worker, abolitionist, and educator dreaming of a more collective future amongst the rubble of capitalist empires.

Photo by [Matthieu Joannon](#) on [Unsplash](#)

**L'espoir C'est la Lutte:
Reflections on
the Night Demo
of July 19th**
August 2, 2024

Report on a recent autonomous march in solidarity with Palestine in so-called Montreal. Originally posted to [Montreal Counter-Info](#).

On July 19th, under a calm night sky, over 60 people assembled in downtown Montreal to march for Palestine. The demonstration was publicized without using social media, resulting in no police presence visible at the gathering location. The account that follows comes from a couple of participants in the demo. We hope to share an understanding of what went down for those who weren't there and make some suggestions for next time.

Around 10pm, the march set off, a front banner announcing "L'espoir c'est la lutte" alongside a circle-A, and a banner reading "Liberation to the people, liberation to the land" bringing up the rear. Snaking through streets beneath skyscrapers and chanting, the energy in the crowd gradually rose as we acclimated to the strange reality: no bike cops, no riot cops, no cops in front, in back, or on the sides, just us and our friends and comrades, and their friends and comrades, and theirs, our black bloc and keffiyeh bloc protecting us from the hundred or so surveillance cameras that would inertly record our stroll.

The march lasted sixteen minutes. Fireworks were set off upon reaching Square Victoria, site of the Al-Soumoud camp, dismantled two weeks prior. Demonstrators quickly began breaking bank windows, hitting a CIBC and Scotiabank. Heading against traffic on Saint-Jacques, we were greeted ecstatically by Friday night party-goers, who stepped into the street to cheer, and drivers who rolled down their windows to high-five black-gloved militants. Some supportive passersby began excitedly following the demo as it continued towards the Caisse de Dépôt et Placement du Québec (CDPQ). The CDPQ, which had been singled out by the Al-Soumoud camp a block away, has \$14 billion invested in companies complicit in the genocide in Palestine. Though its windows appeared challenging to break, several were tagged, several others shattered, and a smoke device was tossed through an

off the fascists. But now isn't a time for celebration. What we saw yesterday and the reports from comrades on the ground in Rotherham comes nothing short of attempted murder.

And now we are seeing new threats and calls to action from the far-Right to target those that support asylum seekers. We cannot let this stand unopposed. To our comrades; stay safe. And to those who threaten our communities; let it be known ¡No pasarán!

Report from the [Anarchist Communist Group \(ACG\)](#) on Plymouth, Devon on August 5th:

At least two hundred fascists faced us tonight, and I would estimate three hundred antifascists were present.

The Stand Up Against Racism counter-demo began at 6pm, and there was already a notable fash presence, despite their own demo (riot) not being due to start until 7pm. The police presence was light, and a group of 30 or so anarchists patrolled the outskirts of the counter-demo, and were needed to forcibly remove a number of fash that attempted to infiltrate the counter demo to attack/heckle speakers.

As the clock ticked towards 7, more and more police vehicles began to surround us, but worryingly, we seemed to have small groups of fash on all sides of us, just standing around, seemingly unnoticed by the police. Just before 7, it became apparent there was a very large fascist presence moving south towards us on Armada way. They were stopped by a line of police, and chanting began from both sides. As far as I could tell, they were completely drowned out by our side.

Towards 8pm, the lead fash elements began to try and break clear of the police, making their way along Royal Parade, the small black bloc group followed them - and found ourselves directly face to face with punches being thrown for a few moments, until the police managed to get

back in between us again. A stand off then ensued on the corner of Whimble Street, and before long we found ourselves under a barrage of beer cans, bottles, and rocks the size of my hand.

Some time later, the fash moved to the opposite end of Armada Way, towards the Theatre Royal, attempting to get around the police to get at us again. We continued to shadow them, and again had to meet them head on before the police could separate us. A giant anarchist continually put himself in the firing line in front of the counter-protest, leading hand to hand fighting whenever the fascists broke through the police - he took punches from multiple people and carried on battling despite blood dripping from his nose.

The fash then began chucking more rocks and flares at us, but continued to be drowned out by our chanting. At around 9pm, the stewards decided to call an end to the counter-protest, leaving those of us that remained heavily outnumbered and under a barrage of missiles, and probably in danger of being overwhelmed without the police presence. Multiple people surrounding me took blows from rocks and coins thrown from the north side of Royal Parade, and hilariously, the fash brought out some fireworks - and hit themselves with them far more than they hit us.

Towards 10pm, the police forced the fash back up Armada Way, putting them out of projectile range. By half 10, we couldn't see them, and the remaining anti-fascist group began to thin out.

We held the square throughout, and the anarchist contingent was at the front ready to face them for the duration.

For more updates, be sure to follow [It's Going Down on Mastodon](#).

Anarchists in the Labor Movement #2
August 6, 2024

Second part in an ongoing series of interviews with anarchists involved in the labor movement. Originally posted to website of the Black Rose Anarchist Federation.

This is the second in a new series of serialized interviews that we are calling *Anarchists in the Labor Movement*. In this installment we bring you interviews with two nurses in the Southern United States.

As the title suggests, this series engages with anarchists who are active in workplace organizing. Some of those we speak to in this series are building a militant minority within the rank-and-file of their existing union, others are organizing the unorganized through new union campaigns, while others still are finding ways to build the capacity to win shop floor fights in contexts where union support is not available.

In part, our aim with these interviews is simply to shine a light on the presence of anarchist militants in the U.S. labor movement. More substantively, we ask participants to critically reflect on their experiences, including both successes and failures, to draw out generalizable lessons.

Some, but not all of those interviewed in this series are members of Black Rose / Rosa Negra.

Answers have been edited for clarity and length

Xaquiri - Nurse

BRRN: How would you summarize your politics in one sentence?

Xaquiri: Anarchist-communist: a communist analysis of political economy with an anti-authoritarian praxis regarding power relations and the state.

BRRN: Please share some background on the campaign you are working on

Xaquiri: We are a group of 800

Registered Nurses at a level one trauma center in Louisiana that is the non-profit descendant of a large public hospital that was closed after Hurricane Katrina. I had dreams of unionizing since I started working there five years ago, but that accelerated after the obvious dire necessity of COVID. We have had several failed starts in organizing since then, but the most recent campaign really took off this past spring, after another group of nurses at a neighboring hospital were on the verge of filing for election right before their hospital was sold to the parent company of my facility, so a lot of the energy from that organizing was spread to us.

BRRN: Are you working with an established union or going independent?

Xaquiri: We are working with an established union National Nurses United (NNU) because they were already on the ground working nurses at the other hospital that got sold. I also chose to engage with them because they have a lot of resources to invest in supporting our effort, which is unusual for an established union to put resources in organizing new facilities in the South. I also found them to take a more militant approach to organizing than many unions — greater willingness to strike, aversion to worker-management partnerships, and engagement with intersecting justice issues instead of a narrow focus on building membership.

BRRN: How do you see your anarchist politics as relating to organizing for power with coworkers?

Xaquiri: A big part of my politics is the belief in ordinary people to get radicalized and shift power relations away from capital right where they are. I'm excited to see people who have never considered themselves political before now becoming engaged with all sorts of struggles, and that is all based on recognizing their collective power and where they are positioned in relation to the ruling class.

BRRN: Do you ever talk about your anarchist politics with
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coworkers? Do you talk “politics” (world events, local power structures) with your coworkers at all?

Xaquiri: At this stage I generally try to avoid it because so many people are so new to this way of thinking.

BRRN: Does organizing in unions fit into your vision for transforming society or for revolution?

Xaquiri: I guess you can say I have an anarcho-sindicalist theory of change and popular power. Unions are the closest thing to a radically democratic organization with control over resources in our society. Showing people that it is possible to take power on a local level with broader implications over the whole society is one of the most important parts of building unions for me.

David - Nurse

BRRN: How would you summarize your politics in one sentence?

David: I'd say nowadays the ideology most animating to me is syndicalism.

BRRN: Share background about the campaign you worked on.

David: I'm a nurse at a large university hospital in the Southeast. During the height of COVID, people in my unit were pretty pissed off and I started to hear that folks were feeling similar elsewhere in the hospital too. I heard from a friend in management that the hospital thought there was a union push happening, so I thought that if there was, I wanted to be part of it. NNU had recently won an election at a hospital in our state, so I figured that if folks were organizing at our hospital it was probably them. I got in touch with NNU and asked if they were organizing at my hospital. They said no, but if I wanted to initiate something, they would be willing to help. I asked some of my coworkers what they thought, and they were all pretty on board, so we started.

Now sadly, our effort was not successful. After more than two years of organizing, engagement dropped to nil and NNU pulled out, I think rightfully. That said, the effort was not a total bust. My unit, which was probably the most fully organized, got new equipment we had been asking for for years, our awful nurse manager got removed and replaced with our great clinical team lead, and faced with the prospect of a union, the hospital gave us the biggest raises since I've worked there, removed some of the hurdles placed on clinical ladder advancement, and gave us a parking stipend. Without a doubt the effort to unionize, even while unsuccessful, yielded improvements for nurses at our hospital.

BRRN: How did you decide between organizing with an established union and going independent?

David: We organized with NNU. What I found was that at our institution, in the South, there was a lot of fear around unionizing. People really had an impression that our institution was all powerful and could just crush anyone they wanted. Because of that, other nurses seemed to really want to be involved with a union that they felt was established enough to stand up to our institution. Organizing with NNU gave the nurses at my hospital faith that this was a serious effort that could actually make headway.

Sadly, I think organizing independently or with a smaller non-nurse union just wouldn't have gotten the traction to get us even where we got. That said, NNU was not perfect. I generally perceived a reluctance from their leadership to invest resources in our effort because of the size of our institution. It seems that after their loss at Hopkins, they're pretty gunshy about large hospital systems and are focusing more on smaller institutions they think they can win more easily and with less perceived risk. I also think we would have benefitted from more organizers from NNU and more experienced organizers. They had a tendency to assign us organizers and then reallocate them frequently; hand-

movements?

H.R.: We can't be human without our connection to other humans. We're social creatures. We're part of a community of life that's not just human. So, understanding your role in terms of community within that greater scheme of life, of ecological life, is important. And building these connections is so important because industrial culture has severed our connection to nature. But nature is what makes us human. We learn what it means to be human by learning from the earth. That's something I've learned from Indigenous movements, writers, and activists.

It's hard because we internalize oppression, which can be a toxin that is spread through community. And yet, community is an extended family and an extended circle of love. So, you can choose how to build community and how to engage with it. If it weren't for my communal ties with the people who have come before me who I'm still connecting with, who inspire me, I wouldn't be here. They keep me going. It's hard though, and I know for me, sometimes I need to retreat in times to find my connection and to continue to show up. I need to have good boundaries and some guard up. We need to have collectively permeable boundaries. There's a difference between having a wall, which is a tool of war, versus boundaries, which are important and healthy for life. Finding that balance is essential, especially now in a time of pandemics. I see the coronavirus as an expression of an ecological crisis. We're going to continue to see viral storms take shape and we need to understand this balance.

A.A.: People in this struggle need to understand that this is long term. You have to have a place within you that you go to with all that you're going to experience being in this struggle. Because it's tough.

I just came back from an indigenous retreat in Texas at a sweat lodge that's women led. I watched the process of building that lodge and what became so important for me was how everything they did had purpose and intentionality. This helps us to

see all that is sacred. There are some important lessons in there, whether you're Marxist, an anarchist, or just a rebel who wants change. This is still Turtle Island to Indigenous folks. And I think our objective is really to figure out how to pry this empire off the back of the Turtle so that we can all be fucking free!

What we went through back in the sixties and seventies, we got too scientific, and we missed out some things that are really about our humanity. A lot of the revolutions we put on a pedestal for being successful—like the Russian Revolution, the Cuban Revolution—but they end up recreating some other form of oppressive society. Part of anarchism for me is to be open. So, we have to figure out how to nurture the spiritual as a source of power in this struggle. It reminds me of in the days of the People's Revolutionary Constitutional Convention that the Panthers held in Philly in 1970, with the idea of bringing all these movements together within the Empire. To see how we can all be free.

P M-G: What advice would you give about how we should relate to each other and accept differences of opinion without condemning each other? How do we nurture a community, while engaging in collective self-care and transformation?

H.R.: Allow principles to guide our work and have space for accountability. I know I'm not going to get along with everybody and I don't need to work closely with everybody. I don't need to know what the nitty-gritty of that work is. If the larger structure is being maintained and bringing us together in unity and if everyone is acting in ways that are principled and towards a shared mission, I can trust that. We're all super different and that's a beautiful thing. We're not always going to get along and that's a part of the friction and tension. But we can create a lot of forward momentum from that if it's being guided by something that is principled and shared.

A.A.: We have to figure it out as we go, but a thing that has always attracted me to anarchism—is that part about how we are with each

other. This is so key to the vision we have for the world that we want. If we don't want a sexist world, we have to practice anti-sexism within our relations. If we don't want an ageist or ableist world, we have to practice it now . . . When we come together now, we have to practice it, and be willing to admit we make mistakes when we practice this. It doesn't just change automatically. And this takes compassion. When we begin to accept each other with compassion, this will be easier. Then we will learn to transform these relationships.

Young folks need to know not only how to organize in the community, but how they can change themselves and have better relationships with each other, which is part of community care. That's why transformative practices need to be incorporated into what we do. It can't just be you got an ideology now and you think that's it for you. Now you are the revolutionary that can change the world. No, don't work that way. It takes courage to be vulnerable, to say, "Yo, I need some help working through my shit 'cuz that Empire is in me . . . so we can really build authentic revolutionary relationships that can transform the world."

But the younger generation, they want to do better than what we did. And the level of solidarity we're seeing in Gen Z's pro-Palestinian support, anti-genocide is blowing my mind. I can't remember this level of solidarity even with the anti-Vietnam War. I get a sense that they want to figure out ways how to be better with each other as they're doing their work.

P M-G: I want to get into a little bit about what y'all think about the state of radical movements today. There's the genocide in Gaza, there's a major election coming up in this country . . . It's a time of change around the world. What should we be paying attention to and doing?

A.A.: Part of my concern is security state; the state of surveillance, the continuous growth of the prison industrial complex. I think those things are still closing in on us, to the point where they have the

encounter contradictions within organizing communities and felt I needed to do something else. I needed to figure out what my role was and not necessarily as a public or professional organizer. Again, I was always driven by my spirituality and my love. Rose Braz was a mentor of mine—what an immense, powerful woman and organizer she is—and I sought her out about some of these contradictions. And she said, “You know, you feel called to heal and you’re doing this medicine work; we need more abolitionists, more radicals to do that work. If you feel like that’s where life is taking you, go for it!” So, I did. I left the Bay and came to Portland to study natural medicine. Now I’m licensed as a clinician. But my love is still very much for the earth, for people, and dismantling obstacles to our collective liberation to allow for our ability to just live.

P M-G: You both have decades of political consciousness and organizing experience. Retrospectively, what are your biggest takeaways? What lessons have you learned that you’d want to pass on to someone just getting involved in social change work?

AA: I’ve been around for a while and when I’m speaking with young folks, I want to make sure I’m giving the best advice and encouragement that I can because I still believe that we can change this world. The thing is, you want to make sure, no matter what you have been through—the ups, the downs, the things that work, things that didn’t work—to be as honest as you can about it. When I look back on the early years—the Black Power movement to the Panthers, even up to the prison experience—then I get to see, “Oh, we could have been better in this area or that area.” The time I spent in prison was a lot of that looking back period for me. Before that it was 24/7 revolutionary work . . . not a lot of time for reflection.

But now I’m there in prison and thinking about what happened: “Why am I here? Why are so many of the comrades now in prison?” I wanted to know where we went wrong, why we lost, why the counter-intelligence program was

eventually successful, and how to avoid making the mistakes again. And I got access to other readings. You know, in my head I’m still this Panther. A Marxist-Leninist. Maoist even. But the Critical Theory crew, from Eric Fromm to Herbert Marcuse and others; they had some different analysis about these revolutionary struggles that wasn’t the canon of Stalin. Then I started reading not only the critical theory, but other radicals. And, at some point, little bits and pieces of the anarchism started getting in there. These different perspectives allowed me to really think about the way we saw this struggle. What we (the Panthers) had believed was revolutionary in a sense, but with some limitations. It wasn’t great how we saw the struggles of women; it wasn’t great how we saw internalized oppression . . . Our own behaviors also contributed to our downfall. A lot of people don’t want to hear that, especially your comrades. But if you want to win, then you’ve got to let that ego shit go and say, “Where else might we have done better?” And that’s where the critical theories and anarchism and radical feminism began to help me to see things differently.

So, I want young people to understand revolution from a very personal perspective. How is it really going to impact you? What is it really opening you up to? Like, who’s Ashanti as a part of this? I’m still a part of this heterosexist, evil society and it’s been a part of my peoples’ struggle for the last 400 years. There’s no way that I can deny that. The shit of this system is also a part of me. In this struggle, it’s on two fronts; it’s not only the larger system, but also what it looks like inside of us. I want young people to see what their own connection is to this system is and to see their possibilities.

The best thing that really helped me to see this was when I started reading about anarchism. Now, not only do I want to be the best anti-sexist, but I want to open myself up to how life expresses itself. I joke about it at times when I say that when I first came out of prison I wanted to work with Love and Rage folks, but they had these spiked hair styles and I was like,

“What the fuck is this?” But another part of me wanted to learn; “I don’t care how crazy they look. I want to learn.” And it showed me that there’s all kinds of folks who are oppressed by this society and who want out from under that oppression. If their lives don’t match mine, that’s okay.

The Zapatistas have that idea, too; a world where many worlds exist. Our lives are very diverse, and we all want our liberation. We just have to figure out how it’s going to work in this monstrous, US imperialist empire. So, Black folks’ struggle takes on particular characteristics, but it’s not divorced from all the other struggles—the Chicanos, the Indigenous folks, the Puerto Rican independence movement, the workers, the environmentalist movement, Palestine. It’s never simple, but it’s doable.

H.R.: I’d say never stop questioning; question your questions. Get with mentors, but also make sure that your mentors hold space for questioning and grapple with those questions with you. Recognize that you are a part of something immense. The Earth is all about life and death is a part of it, right? You are a part of something so much greater and when you take steps towards that collective health and life and love, you’re bringing with you something so much deeper. Trust that. The ongoing genocides around the world, that’s real. But the little steps that you are a part of, the little acts of kindness and love and the ways that you are showing up in support of community and life. That’s real, too. Movements are about cultivating and nourishing life as steps towards collective liberation. That is a part of that picture, too. It’s important to have this perspective that goes back and forth between the local and the global. So, continue to get involved, but don’t lose sight of your own care and holding that deep sacred space within you to stay in alignment with the goodness of life.

P M-G: Where should those of us who are dedicated to transforming society be putting our energies? And what role do you see collective care and nurturance playing in sustaining radical social

power in our workplace, and what we’re owed for the work we do. I also have found that talk about workplace democracy is an idea that can connect with people. Apolitical people already have an understanding of democracy, so it’s not a big leap to be like, “Hey, why doesn’t our workplace work like that? Why do we supposedly have a say in our government but not when we’re at work?” People seem to get that.

I wouldn’t say these issues defeated our campaign though. Ultimately, the major issue we ran into was just the level of turnover our hospital experiences — but the lack of experienced organizers and the frequent trading out of organizers didn’t help. Still though, I think NNU was probably the better choice for us because it opened door with nurses to have faith in the effort.

BRRN: How do you see your anarchist politics as relating to organizing for power with coworkers?

David: To me, workplace organizing is the ultimate expression of anarchist politics. I affiliate with anarchism mostly because I believe in the democratic organization of our society and economy. I believe in building democratically organized popular power at our jobs. It’s where we enlist ourselves into the application and production of power. So gaining power in our workplaces is one of the most direct ways for us to build popular power and change the conditions of our lives, and that’s what I’m seeking.

BRRN: Do you ever talk about your anarchist politics with coworkers? Do you talk ‘politics’ (world events, local power structures) with your coworkers at all?

David: We talk about politics at work frequently. My coworkers are generally either apolitical or progressive/liberal. I often engage in these discussions; I enjoy talking and debating this stuff with them. I think they know I’m pretty far to the left, and I generally share with those I’m close with that I’m an anarchist. I try not to get into too much leftist rhetoric with my coworkers: I don’t think they’re very familiar with it so it doesn’t connect with them. People are always willing to talk shit about our bosses and administration though. Folks are really animated by talk about controlling our own work, having

power in our workplace, and what we’re owed for the work we do. I also have found that talk about workplace democracy is an idea that can connect with people. Apolitical people already have an understanding of democracy, so it’s not a big leap to be like, “Hey, why doesn’t our workplace work like that? Why do we supposedly have a say in our government but not when we’re at work?” People seem to get that.

BRRN: Did your campaign include others who see themselves as ‘political’, but are part of a different political tradition or political organization?

David: I reached out to some left organizations around our city to see if they could help me with connecting to other nurses, but sadly they weren’t much help. There were other political anarchist-aligned folks who were involved, some really actively and consistently and others not. I was honestly a bit disappointed at how some folks who seemed to profess our ideology didn’t show up. I also have been kind of bummed to see how many anarchists just uncritically went into travel nursing. Travel nursing has acted as a release valve for our institutions, allowing them to shuffle nurses around without having to fire anyone. Staff leaving was what ultimately undid our campaign.

We ended up at a place where many of the units had been cored out staff-wide, consisting only of very senior nurses just trying to get to retirement without issue and new grad nurses who didn’t plan to stay, neither were willing to take on the leadership in their units to make the union happen. The people who could lead in these units, middle-experience nurses with years of work left and who know their coworkers, all left for travel positions, especially the political ones and those who were agitated about our working conditions. This may have given them a better paid deal for a while, but in the end it’s leaving us all with a rawer one. I think all of us who align with anarchism need to consider what use having a political identity is if we are not willing to act on it.

BRRN: Does organizing in unions fit into your vision for transforming society or for revolution?

David: So I’ve lost a bit of faith in the idea of “the revolution.” I’m not sure it’s coming. I think we need to be honest with ourselves that our movement is relatively marginal at this point, we have limited reach and even more limited power, and I mean that for the entire left. So I think we need to be looking for niches where we can build power and expand from, so that when crises occur we can leverage our positions for greater popular power. I think nurse unions are a great avenue for that, so say the next time a crisis like COVID occurs, maybe we take over the hospitals, and who knows from there.

BRRN: What resources have helped you most as you’ve organized?

David: Honestly I’m not a big theory reader. I’ve been involved in radical organizing for a bunch of years now and I’ve learned a lot from my compatriots.

BRRN: What advice can you share with anarchists looking to organize a union? What do you wish you had known when you started?

David: Oh, I wish I did so much differently. First, I’d say we were too cautious to start. We should have started much earlier, even a few months earlier may have made a big difference. Talk to folks right away. There were a bunch of people that I held off talking to and by the time I did while they supported and wanted to help but they were leaving. A lot of this delaying ended up being due to concerns for security, and while it’s definitely important, we shouldn’t let it slow us down. I’d also say reach out to political people of course, but don’t count on them. I think it’s important to just engage in a spirit of solidarity with your coworkers: you’re all in it together, and you want to be reaching out to all of them.

I’d also say this probably applies to any union, but when working with NNU, try to maintain your own

contact networks. The organizers try to route a lot of the connections through themselves, but can be kind of hit or miss on how good they are at following up. Further, it seems that once the union is formed, NNU doesn't provide a lot of structure. It seems to me that for power to remain with the rank and file and not just default to national leadership in the absence of a governing structure, we'd need to maintain our own networks that we can use to fill that void. Don't surrender the organizing to the organizers, we need to remain actively engaged to win and hold worker power.

If you enjoyed these interviews, we also recommend the first installment in this series: [interview with June, an anarchist academic worker](#).

Collective Care & Sustaining Social Change: Interview with Helia Rasti and Ashanti Alston

August 6, 2024

Paul Messersmith-Glavin speaks with long-time organizers Helia Rasti and Ashanti Alston. Originally published by *Perspectives on Anarchist Theory*

This interview is with social movement veterans who have sacrificed much, and learned a great deal, in trying to change the world. Each in their own way have gained valuable insights into the personal, interpersonal, and structural dynamics at play when confronting established power and have essential lessons to convey to those newly radicalized.

Paul Messersmith-Glavin: Tell us about yourselves, in particular, how were you first politically radicalized?

Ashanti Alston: Born, Michael Alston. Plainfield, New Jersey, 1954. Just this February, I celebrated the big 7-0. I'm an official elder now.

I came of age in that period of the sixties when there was the Civil Rights movement and the Black Power movement, which was the key moment for me. I was a Black teenager understanding that there were people fighting for our freedom in the Civil Rights movement. And then here comes the Black Power movement and the rebellions of '67 all over the United States.

Plainfield is a small town that's racially divided like so many other places. But what was unique about what happened there was that Black folks had got hold of arms from a gun manufacturing plant, including crates of M-1 rifles. So, during the rebellions part of the Plainfield Black community in the West End was actually liberated for at least seven days. Even as this thirteen-year-old, I understood the importance of the movement and felt connection to it. This was serious and way different from Martin Luther King Jr. and the Civil Rights Movement.

The main rebellion was about a mile from the projects where I lived as a child. We could often hear the gunshots. Then one day there was a black car in front of the house and on the top of it in white letters was "Black Power." And the guy in the car was giving out goods to people. That struck me, because I heard the term "Black Power," but this was so bold. I understood the Civil Rights movement, but I didn't know if I could deal with getting water-hosed down the street, spat on, called "nigger" in my face and just taking it. I wanted to fight back. So, this was my entry.

I don't even think I had turned fourteen yet. And I wasn't much of a reader at that point, but now I wanted to read! The Malcolm X autobiography. The stories of Stokely Carmichael and H. Rap Brown. I wanted to go find out about them. Then when school started back up, others were also interested in fighting back. In junior high school there was no Black history. So, there was a coordinated effort to walk out of the two junior high schools and the high school and to march down to City Hall to demand it. And enough of us came out, so that

when the next school year started, we had Black history.

That showed me that there was this powerful unity if we organized. We could make demands and have them met. The rebellion after that lasted a week. When the armored cars came in from the National Guard, they regained control. But it didn't stop us. The was a community center down the street and folks were in there and they're talking, organizing, strategizing. I was just so excited, especially to see folks from the areas that I grew up who I looked up to in getting involved.

Eventually, I found out about the Black Panther Party and my friend's father took us all over to the different offices—from Newark, Jersey City, to Brooklyn and Harlem—to learn what we could do. So, we went to the political education classes and learned the terminologies; this revolution the Panthers were talking about required study, engagement in the community, and organizing. It was different from the spontaneous rebellions. It was more like the organizing when we demanded Black history; you had to have a sustained view and understand that this is a long-term struggle against the system.

Most of us who formed that chapter were high school students and active inside the high school where the rebellion took place. It was in that same area that we did most of our outreach—speaking with folks, selling the Panther paper, and at a certain point starting a storefront and a free clothing program. So, here we are, learning how to work amongst the people in this Panther style . . . Every time I look back at it, I'm like, "Oh my God, we were so young, but we were so ready!"

We had so many folks helping us learn the different things involved with carrying out revolutionary struggle. And it was great because coming out of the Black Power ideology, I didn't have too much love for white folks. But the Panthers always remembered they're human beings, too, and had relationships with so many different people. They were nationalists, but

revolutionary nationalists and didn't just chop white folks off because they're white. It all depends on their practice.

So, it helped me to challenge some of my own limitations and to open up to what this new ideology was telling me about struggle, the history of struggles, the possibility of winning, believing in ourselves, and organizing from below. That carried me for a long time, even up into prison.

Helia Rasti: I was born in Tehran, Iran in 1980. That was at the start of an eight-year war between Iran and Iraq, on the heels of a revolution that ousted a dynasty, the last Shah of Iran. It was part of a popular uprising that brought in theocratic Islamists and started over four decades of Islamist rule.

I was born into a solidly middle-class family. My parents were really scared of having to raise a daughter in the growing patriarchal environment and decided to leave as did many at that time. This was very difficult for them because they loved Iran and didn't want to go but felt forced to. We were able to attain resident status in Germany and I lived there from age five to ten. Being a foreigner in Germany is not easy and my parents (who are both well-educated) wanted access to better opportunities like they had in Iran. So, they left Germany the first chance they could and came to the United States—the "land of opportunity."

I was ten years old when we moved to California and had no idea about the political environment and the history of oppression, genocide, enslavement, and exploitation that the US is founded on. I think a lot of immigrants come here seeking better opportunities because whatever they left behind was so grim. And then you come here and you're like, "whoa." Even though I was raised with this backdrop of intense political activity and very strong anti-imperialist sentiments, I was clueless. But I could just tell this is not right. Something is not right.

I've always been sensitive and empathic. And I knew that despite being an immigrant, being a brown

child who experienced racism, I could still always seek out love and support from my parents. But I remember encountering figures about how every five minutes a girl or a woman is raped, and feeling, "Wow, I've been really protected." So, I felt it was important for me to step up for people who were more vulnerable and for voices that were being silenced.

I grew up in the Bay Area and, after high school, I went to Humboldt State in Northern California. I've always been drawn to nature. I was a biology major initially and I learned about Native American history, the exploitative nature of industrial capitalism, and that Native people are still around and have been resisting genocide and erasure for all these years. I also learned about different resistance movements by listening to lecture series like Michael Parenti who broke down imperialism and Marxism, US foreign policy, and how the CIA and the United States played a huge part in destroying the fabric of different cultures. And, in my country, how they stood against democratic movements to support regimes to access resources for more global power.

I was sitting with all that in the late 90s when the anti-WTO, anti-corporate, globalization movements emerged. I was on the periphery of this, but learning. And then September 11th happened, and I was just like *this is it*. Ward Churchill wrote this essay about the chicken coming home to roost and I was feeling, "Oh, of course, this is going to come back to us to us. The United States is going to reap the repercussions of its global policies." I got on the phone with my mom all excited about this and she said, "What are you saying? You're going to get in trouble, you're Iranian!" But I still felt these were historic times and decided that I had to leave the forest. I realize now it was a spiritual journey that led me to take on political action. It was my love for life, for the earth, for people. This is what kept me seeking out different answers when faced with the contradictions that are presented to us in society . . . So, I came home to the Bay as I realized my work was there and transferred

to San Francisco State.

Within the first week of school there were student organizations tabling, including a Students for Peace group that did gorilla theater. I got in and became really involved with them. At the time we were organizing these huge demonstrations against the bombing of Afghanistan, and it was already clear that they were gearing up to start invading Iraq. I was a part of this mass movement; hundreds of thousands of people, millions of people globally, crying out against war.

That became my world. I spent all my time at school organizing and eventually dropped all my classes because that's the only thing that mattered to me. I then became a part of this woman's center that was helping to open up space for coalition building. San Francisco State has a very radical history, but since the time of the sixties and seventies, the administration has built all these guards and policies against student activism. So, we were organizing this coalition, bringing together different organizations like Ethnic Studies, the Black Student Union, and different cultural groups. We were also doing that with City College.

Eventually I dropped out of school and started doing organizing work full-time. I got involved with the Not in Our Name movement and Direct Action to Stop the War, focusing on street blockades and holding war profiteers accountable by going to them and shutting down their operations. I was especially jiving with these queer anarcho-punk doing public blockades and shutdowns. And it was like the work became my life. It's the thing that kept me going. It felt like, this is what I was brought here for.

So, I continued to seek to deepen my understanding of what the work really was. And it was Critical Resistance that really helped to do so, especially with learning about abolition and how prison industrial abolition was a way to build against the state. At the time, I was doing environmental justice work, focusing on shutting down power plants. But I continued to